

# THE TIMES

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## Europe seeks new President

### Demand for radical reform splits North and South

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

EUROPEAN leaders embarked on a search for a new European Commission president yesterday after Jacques Santer infuriated many of them by defiantly rejecting the charges of political failure that brought the resignation of the whole Brussels executive.

Compounding the political turmoil raging across the 15-nation bloc, a humiliated Mr Santer claimed angrily that the verdict of incompetence by an external fraud inquiry was a shocking travesty. "This picture is distorted. I consider the tone of the report's conclusions to be wholly unjustified," he said.

He was matched by an unrepentant Edith Cresson of France, whose misconduct accelerated the Commission's downfall and was pilloried by the inquiry. She insisted that she had no regrets — although French support for her appeared to be evaporating.

But Mr Santer's hopes of clinging to his job were all but destroyed as Gerhard Schröder, the German Chancellor, began sounding leaders on possible successors at the start of a tour of all 15 EU capitals that had already been planned to pave the way for a crucial pact on spending reform in Berlin next week.

And the Commission President's performance brought instant attack from Britain's two commissioners, Sir Leon Brittan and Neil Kinnock. Mr Kinnock was appalled at the way the Commission appeared to think it was "business as usual", his spokeswoman said.

Evidence for his view was on display as senior officials tried to ignore the political rubble in their headquarters and played down the crisis as a mere impediment to their business of running the Union's affairs.

Sir Leon accused Mr Santer of carping, saying: "I do not think this is the time to carp and cowl at the content of the report. The time for talking and political controversy is over. What is now needed is comprehensive root and branch reform."

Sir Leon and Mr Kinnock are among a number of outgoing commissioners who were not personally tainted by the fraud report and are likely to be reappointed. But, with Mr Santer pushing hard to stay



Javier Solana: joint favourite

on as head of a caretaker team, there was a clear geographical divide over the rest of the Commission and its leader. Pressure for rapid change came mainly from northern governments, while Italy, Spain, and other southern states indicated that they could accept a caretaker administration.

This reflected a widespread view in the Mediterranean that the Commission had fallen victim to a self-righteous crusade by northern politicians. Massimo D'Alema, the Italian Prime Minister, said that he was "worried about the Commission's resignation at such an important time for Europe's future." And Ramon de Miguel, Spain's Europe Minister, said that an unnecessary crisis had been triggered by a "lack of solidarity" with the Commission by political groups in the Parliament.

In glaring contrast, the Governments of Denmark, Sweden, Finland and The Netherlands hailed the Commission's rout as a chance to purge a discredited system. Sweden said it would not reappoint Anita Gradin, its Commissioner, who was in charge of fraud investigation in Brussels.

The only outright backing for Mr Santer came from Luxembourg, his home state and the EU's smallest member. "Luxembourg stresses that all

the criticisms aimed at Mr Santer, have been shown to be unfounded and erroneous," said Jean-Claude Juncker, the Prime Minister.

The most powerful EU governments now want to use the drama to spur sweeping reform and that means ensuring Mr Santer's rapid departure. While Tony Blair was calling in London for root and branch reform, President Chirac said: "More than ever we must have effective, responsible institutions in Europe, which are close to citizens."

Herr Schröder, whose country's presidency of the EU was in trouble before the Brussels debacle, also favoured appointing a strong leader to steer the Commission to the end of its five-year term in December, but he was determined to prevent the crisis from blocking the Berlin summit, and he did not believe that a new president would be chosen there.

He offered no names for a successor to Mr Santer, but speculation focused on a clutch of left-wing politicians from the Mediterranean states — a region that is deemed to be in turn for the top Brussels seat. The most mentioned candidates are Javier Solana, the Nato Secretary-General, and Romano Prodi, the former Italian Prime Minister.

The process is, however, complicated by EU rules that will prevent the governments from guaranteeing the new president a full five-year term when the Commission comes up for renewal at the New Year. That can come only with a new European Parliament — and the choice of the new president is likely to be subject to the same bitter haggling that has marked the exercise for decades.

Pressure for a swift replacement of the Brussels team also came from the European Parliament, whose rout of the Commission has enshrined it as a formidable new force in EU affairs. José-Maria Gil-Robles, the assembly president, said the Santer team "must leave now and not in nine months' time". And Pauline Green, the British Labour MEP who leads the dominant Socialist block, said: "We have the opportunity to create a better Commission for the next millennium."



Edith Cresson arriving at the European Commission headquarters in Brussels yesterday

### Cresson: Je ne regrette rien

BY CHARLES BREMNER AND SUSAN BELL

DEFIANT to the end, Edith Cresson yesterday echoed the words of Edith Piaf when she said: "Je n'ai pas de regrets." The former French Prime Minister also told France 2 television that she had no need to clear her name since the Commission had been found collectively responsible. "There was malfunctioning like in any administration," she said.

However, Mme Cresson's hauteur will be remembered as the catalyst of the catastrophe. The headline in yesterday's *Liberation* said it all: "Cresson sinks the Commission." There was something inevitable in the way that Mme Cresson dragged the Commission into the position where it could be executed by a rampant European Parliament.

Some of her colleagues are now barely on speaking terms with her, believing she could have saved them by sacrificing herself in January. By this week, it was too late.

But while Herr Schröder accepted that the presidency would be discussed in Berlin, he did not want the issue to stand in the way of a deal on the future finances of the Community, and he suggested that

### Blair wants high-flyer appointed quickly

BY PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

TONY BLAIR and Gerhard Schröder called last night for a "political heavyweight" to take over swiftly from Jacques Santer, squashing any attempt by the European Commission President to stay in office.

The Prime Minister said that the unprecedented resignation of the entire Commission executive should be used as the opportunity to push through a root-and-branch reform of Europe's bureaucracy. And he believes that by appointing a "thorough-going reformer" as the new president, the EU may be able to recover from the crisis caused by Monday's damning fraud report.

The German Chancellor, who spent 90 minutes with Mr Blair at Downing Street yesterday, echoed that view, saying Mr Santer's successor had to be highly qualified, with lots of political experience and economic skills.

Next week's special summit in Berlin on the EU budget now seems certain to be dominated by the Brussels convulsions, and Downing Street suggested that EU leaders should make progress towards appointing of a new Commission president by then.

But while Herr Schröder accepted that the presidency would be discussed in Berlin, he did not want the issue to stand in the way of a deal on the future finances of the Community, and he suggested that

there might be an informal summit later to decide who should succeed Mr Santer.

Mr Blair is against naming a stop-gap president to serve until December, when Mr Santer was expected to step down, and instead wants someone who will go on to serve a full term. Potential candidates he might support include Romano Prodi, the former Italian Prime Minister, or the Portuguese Prime Minister, Antonio Guterres.

Mr Blair told MPs that the Commission should remain only until a new one was appointed, but he made plain that he would be seeking the reappointment of the two British commissioners, Neil Kinnock and Sir Leon Brittan.

Mr Santer was by no means solely responsible for the situation uncovered by the report, and many of the issues predated his appointment. But, Mr Blair added: "We cannot have the next president decided in the same way as the last, debating the narrow interests of one country or another. The top jobs, not just in the Commission, but throughout the European institutions, should go to the top people. Merit and merit alone should decide."

There should be a "new contract" between the Commission and Europe's heads of government setting a new course of reform and change for the continent.

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### Jenny Pitman rides into the Cheltenham sunset

BY SIMON BARNES

JENNY PITMAN, jump racing's eternal female lead, prima donna, pantomime dame and principal boy, yielded to her incurable taste for the theatrical by announcing her retirement on the opening day of the Cheltenham Festival, the biggest occasion in her sport.

She will end a career of extraordinary success — success well-seasoned with controversy and feud — at the end of the season.

Pitman, brought up in farmhouse without running water as part of a large family rich only in animals, stormed the male-dominated sport of jump racing.

It would have been a considerable achievement simply to have acquired a trainer's licence in 1975: she went on to become one of the most successful players in the business, training two winners of the Cheltenham Gold Cup and two winners of the Grand National.

John Francome, the former champion jockey, suggested in his autobiography, *Born Lucky*, that trainers at the jump racing's heartland village of Lambourn held a daily shouting competition, judged on volume alone. "But since Jenny Pitman started they have only been competing for second place."

It is unclear whether Francome intends his tribute to Pitman in malice or affection. That is the normal response to Pitman.

She has made scores of enemies with hard words, hot temper and casual rudeness, but

#### LIGHTNING STRIKE

Isabraq — Arabic for "runs like lightning" — won the Smartfil Champion Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival for the second successive year. Charlie Swann, his jockey, said: "He's brilliant." Page 48

she also inspires the most heartfelt devotion. That contradiction is at the heart of Pitman's life-work.

Racing will be quieter without her. She makes Don King, the famously loud-mouthed boxing promoter, seem like a shy, sensitive creature. On the other hand, Pitman is in some ways a shy, sensitive creature herself. She could not have grown so monstrous a carapace of noise and aggression were there not a good deal of softness to protect her softness. Her toughness made her superb at looking after horses, her toughness made her superb at judging them.

She is one of those tough, self-reliant people who brings out a heartfelt protective instinct in those closest to her.

Her achievement in starting from nothing to one of the most powerful stables in jumping would be amazing were she an unencumbered male. Continued on page 3, col 8

### Rats help four infertile fathers

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

FOUR men considered sterile by doctors have fathered healthy babies after their sperm was matured inside rats' testicles, an Italian gynaecologist said yesterday. The experiment was denounced by Italy's Bioethics Committee as "an extreme manipulation" while other experts said that the operation could have "unpredictable genetic consequences".

Dr Severino Antinori, who has helped post-menopausal women to become pregnant, told an international assisted-procreation conference in Venice that three Italians and a Japanese had benefited from the "cure" — developed by him with Professor Nikolaos Sofikitis of Tottori University at Yonago, Japan.

Dr Antinori emphasised that the method circumvented Italian legislation because it did not require an external sperm donor. After three months inside rat tissue the "mature" sperm was used to create an embryo through invitro fertilisation. Couples were hesitant before the procedure, "but it was the only way for them to have a child. Then the children were born and the fear of any kind of deformity was proven to be unfounded".



"Oh look, he's got his father's tail"



# Blair manages to wound even after forgetting his s-word

After lunch yesterday — and before his Commons Statement on the resignation of the European Commission — we can imagine Tony Blair pacing his office floor, wrestling with an intractable problem.

He had his text before him. He was stuck on the second paragraph: "The Committee of Independent Experts, set up last January on a Motion from the Socialist Group in the European Parliament

Yet again, he took a run at this. "The Committee of Inde-

pendent Experts, set up last January on a Motion from the So... So... So... No. He just couldn't get it out. Beads of sweat lined his brow.

He tried again. "... set up last January on a Motion from the S - S - Soc..."

A helpful aide intervened. "Try saying it in two halves, Prime Minister. You can surely say 'social' if you change the context. Think 'social occasion'; think 'social dinner party'."

Mr Blair tried this. "Social, social..." — yes, so long as he kept those mental champagne

corks popping, the word was easy.

"Now say 'is' Prime Minister. Think 'is-ambul'."

"Is," barked Blair.

"Now try the whole phrase, Prime Minister."

"... set up last January on a motion from the Social... Social... S-S-S-Socialist... Dammit Can't I just say 'Labour'?"

"But Prime Minister, it isn't the Labour Group of the European Parliament. It includes other countries. They're the Socialist Group."

"Look — hell — y'know —

I'm praising these guys. How about 'Third Way Group'?"

"Or could I say 'New Labour'?"

"Regrettably, Prime Minister, these terms do not yet exist in the party nomenclature of the Parliament. You'll just have to try to say 'Socialist'. Nobody will blame you personally."

And so it came to pass that

Tony Blair sailed into the Commons Chamber shortly before 3.30 clutching his notes, and began his Statement. The first paragraph went fine.

He launched into the second. "The Committee of Independent Experts set up last January on a Motion from the Socialist Group."

Civil servants held their

breath... "Labour Group of the European Parliament." Uh-oh. Tories hoisted. Bearded Labour lefties bawled. Madam Speaker smiled. But, frankly, Blair didn't care. The occasion was going his way. It went his way throughout. Even critics had to admit the way he turned round what had looked like a bad day for Europhiles.

The Eurosceptics had arrived — cock-a-hoop. Ho-ho! Not so jaunty now Pierre! Where are all your macaroni airs and graces now, euro-dog-eating garlic-eaters?

Tam Dalyell (Lab, Linlithgow) told Blair that persuading fellow Europeans to confront fraud in their own countries was tough — "not least if they're Italians". MPs gasped and giggled.

But, to Dalyell as to others, Blair transformed Euro-setback into Euro-Brit opportunity. Euro-believers should rejoice, he implied: events were running strongly for reform, and Britain could lead it.

Significantly it was Sir Edward Heath who sounded the most telling alarm: our partners were not easily led, the

old man suggested. William Hague, decided to present Blair's response as inadequate.

Had he heard Sir Edward he might have thought better and called it pie-in-the-sky.

Responding, Blair mentioned Jacques Santer and looking straight at Hague, snorted that the Tories were making a habit of appointing compromise candidates who seem like a good idea at the time.

Ouch. For all who believe that nemesis does not follow hubris, that was a corker.



**MATTHEW PARRIS**  
POLITICAL SKETCH

## Inquiry told of hospital records chaos

By IAN MURRAY, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

A PICTURE of administrative chaos at a hospital that was supposed to be a centre of excellence began to emerge yesterday, the first day of the marathon public inquiry into the Bristol children's heart operations scandal.

The £15 million inquiry, the longest and most comprehensive to be held within the National Health Service, was ordered by Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, after the General Medical Council hearing into the deaths of 29 of babies at Bristol Royal Infirmary and Bristol Children's Hospital.

The inquiry, in an office block in Bristol, takes over from the point where the GMC left off last June, when it found the heart surgeons James Wisheart and Janardan

Dhasmana guilty of serious professional misconduct for carrying on operating on children even though they knew too many were dying. Wisheart was struck off; Dhasmana was censured and has since lost his job. The hospital's chief executive, John Roylance, was also struck off the medical register for failing to stop what was going on.

Over the next 18 months the inquiry, which is being chaired by Ian Kennedy, professor of health law, ethics and policy at University College London, will look into more than 2,000 operations on children at the hospitals to try to find out what went wrong and to learn lessons that can be used to improve healthcare throughout the NHS. The op-

erations led to death or brain damage for more than 150 infants.

However, records are so poor that the inquiry still does not know exactly how many operations were performed between 1984 and 1995. Information was stored by a number of methods, and the computer used to collate them was stolen. None of the official logs is complete. Consequently, the inquiry will rely heavily on evidence from parents whose children were operated on.

In his opening address, Brian Langstaff, QC, counsel for the inquiry, said the aim was to get at the truth so that wider lessons could be learnt and recommendations made to improve health care in the NHS.

Getting the facts accurately would be difficult because a number of different systems had been used in different periods for different procedures by different individuals. He said a television documentary in 1987 suggested without any hard evidence that things were going wrong. This had been denied in the programme by Mr Wisheart, using his own figures. "In the past a non-specific allegation backed up by no figures was met by figures which in themselves are controversial," Mr Langstaff said. "Neither approach is good enough for this inquiry."

Almost 29,000 documents have been scanned into the inquiry's database, with half a million pages of clinical evidence.

More than 240 parents have sent in completed questionnaires about what happened to their children. Of these, 107 are members of the Bristol Heart Children's Action Group, which represents those campaigning for compensation, and 36 are from the Bristol Surgeons' Support Group, which backs the doctors.



Tracey Clarke, whose daughter was born with transposed arteries. "I thought she was going to be in the best hands"

## Mother's tearful testimony on daughter's last hours

Parents were thrilled to see blue baby turn pink, but heartbreak awaited them, reports Ian Murray

Tracey Clarke broke down in tears as she told the inquiry how she learnt that her daughter had died in the arms of a nurse a week after an operation she believed would give her a long and healthy life.

Tracey Clarke insisted on continuing to speak, despite the offer of an adjournment from the inquiry chairman, Ian Kennedy.

Mrs Clarke, 36, said her daughter, Melissa, was born normally in 1990 but began to turn blue because of a heart condition an hour afterwards.

The baby was rushed to hospital in Exeter where a doctor said she had a 50-50 chance of survival. A week later the baby was taken to Bristol Royal Infirmary where a cardiologist told Mrs Clarke that the baby's major arteries were transposed and that a minor operation immediately, followed by a major one in nine months to switch the arteries.

She saw Janardan Dhasmana for the first time the follow-

ing July when he explained the difficult switch operation needed. "I thought she was going to be in the best hands," Mrs Clarke said.

She was unaware that the surgeon had decided to do a simpler operation to transpose the veins — a procedure requiring further major surgery when the child is about 15. "We didn't read the documents about the operation. We just wanted to hand our child over to them to make her better. When she died, I wished we had asked for the easier operation because I thought she would still be alive. Only later did I discover she had in fact had the easier operation and had still died."

The operation was carried out in October and Mr Dhas-

mana told the mother all had gone well. "She looked pink and all the blue tinge had gone. There was all the paraphernalia of the intensive care unit sticking out of her, but she looked lovely," Mrs Clarke told the inquiry.

Two days later she arrived with her husband and found the baby surrounded by doctors who said something had gone wrong. Mr Dhasmana told them that the baby still had a 70 per cent chance of survival. Only later did Mrs Clarke learn that mechanical problems had occurred with a ventilator and the baby had not been oxygenated properly for several hours.

A couple of evenings later, she rang the hospital and was told that "everything is going

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Labour peer calls for Lords rethink

The former Labour leader in the Lords will launch an attack next week on government plans to limit the democratic legitimacy of a reformed second chamber.

Lord Richards, who was sacked last July, will publish a book condemning the Government's favoured option of a largely appointed and indirectly elected Upper House.

In *Unfinished Business: Reforming the House of Lords*, he argues that this would produce a Lords that was neither sufficiently legitimate nor accountable to act as an effective check on the executive.

His own blueprint envisages a mainly directly elected chamber with reduced powers. It would be effective without challenging the supremacy of the Commons, he says.

#### Bishops oppose pre-nuptial plan

Roman Catholic bishops have accused the Government of undermining marriage by proposing that couples enter into pre-nuptial agreements. In their response to the Government's green paper, *Supporting Families*, they say that such arrangements are a "fallure clause" and favour the richer partner. The Right Rev Peter Smith, Bishop of East Anglia, said: "Pre-nuptial agreements imply an expectation of marriage breakdown."

#### Brutal attack on youth 'was racist'

A black teenager has emerged from a coma after being kicked in the head by three white assailants as he walked home from a fish and chip shop. Police are considering the possibility that the attack on David Virgo, 19, a landscaper, in Blackheath, north of Birmingham, was racially motivated. Officers believe that racist comments were made to him before the attack took place on Saturday night.

#### Manchester tops careers table

Manchester University has knocked Cambridge off top spot in an annual poll of employers' preferred sources of graduates for the first time in a decade. More than 200 large companies contributed to the *Sigmopsis to Employability* 1999 survey. They rated Manchester top for business and finance courses and also considered its careers service the best in Britain. Sheffield Hallam was the employers' favourite new university.

## Straw's £170m crime-fighting plan

By JILL SHERMAN  
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JACK STRAW announced a three-year, £170 million plan yesterday to tackle high crime rates by extending the use of closed-circuit television and focusing police resources on crime-blighted areas.

The Home Secretary said that part of the money would go towards improving security in the worst housing estates. Local councils and housing associations will be able to bid for cash for projects to re-

duce social exclusion by improving security in town centres and housing areas.

New CCTV systems will be installed in housing estates, towns, bus and railway stations and particularly car parks. Mr Straw said. About £20 million has been allocated for next year, £60 million for the following year and £70 million for the third year. "In the right context CCTV can significantly reduce crime and disorder," he said.

"It is like having a number of police officers permanently on the beat in particu-

lar streets, with eyes in the backs of their heads and an incontrovertible record of what they have seen," he told MPs during a Commons debate. "CCTV can deter criminals, greatly assist the police and others in bringing offenders to justice and to help reduce people's fear of crime."

Mr Straw will announce this week the first 11 areas in which a Government initiative to target policing will be trialled. Next month he will announce the first 60 areas to benefit from a £50 million anti-burglary scheme. Police stations, page 10

PICTURES of Mohamed Al Fayed's son and Diana, Princess of Wales, were published in the public interest to counter his alleged lies, the High Court ruled yesterday.

Mr Justice Jacob rejected claims for damages for breach of copyright against *The Sun*, which published the stills taken from a security camera. Mr

## Diana pictures 'justified'

By MICHAEL HARVEY

Al Fayed claimed that his son Dodi and the Princess had visited his house, Villa Windsor, the former Paris home of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, for two hours on the day before they died. He insisted they had looked over the house with the aim of making it their marital home, although the Princess's family has denied that she was to marry.

The stills showed that the

couple were in the house for less than 28 minutes. Hyde Park Residence Ltd, which provides security services for Mr Al Fayed, said the pictures from video surveillance were handed to *The Sun* by their former chief security officer Reuben Murrell without their authority. But the judge rejected the company's claim for summary judgment against the newspaper.

### Senior nur

Manchester University has knocked Cambridge off top spot in an annual poll of employers' preferred sources of graduates for the first time in a decade. More than 200 large companies contributed to the *Sigmopsis to Employability* 1999 survey. They rated Manchester top for business and finance courses and also considered its careers service the best in Britain. Sheffield Hallam was the employers' favourite new university.

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مكتبة الأمل



# Eton boy hanged in fainting game

**Inquest told that 15-year-old took search for strangulation 'buzz' too far, reports Helen Johnstone**

BOYS at Eton regularly played a "fainting game" that involved two of them tightening a dressing gown cord around the neck of a third, an inquest into the death of a 15-year-old pupil was told yesterday. When the boy being "fainted" stopped tapping his thigh, that was the signal that the desired state of unconsciousness had been reached.

The inquest into the death of Nicholas Taylor was told that he had decided to continue playing the game on his own. He was found on February 22 hanging by a towelling cord from his bedroom door.

A pupil told the hearing, at Windsor, that up to ten boys in Baldwin's Bec House at Eton, the school attended by Princes William and Harry, had tried the game between 70 and 100 times over a two to three-week period before dropping out.

Robert Wilson, the East Berkshire Coroner, said: "I have been sitting in this court for 28 years and I thought I had heard everything. How naive can I be?"

"The fainting game, in my language attempted strangulation, taking place between boys who are some of the cream of our society and probably of above average intelligence, why? What words spring to mind? Crazy, mad, stupid? What on earth were they thinking of? What would be the inevitable outcome sooner or later?"

The inquest was told that Nicholas, from Esher in Surrey, had demonstrated his method of self-strangulation to fellow pupils but had never carried it out in front of them. One pupil said Nicholas fainted most nights — the game was played between supper and prayers — sometimes up to three times. He said: "He seemed to

want to do it when he was under pressure with exams etcetera." Several boys described getting a buzz out of the game. Others said it did nothing for them but relieved the boredom in the free time before prayers.

A pupil from Baldwin's Bec said that the fainting game had started by chance after Nicholas had "tried to strangle" him last November with a jumper. "We had been fooling around. I fainted and then came round. We told everyone what had happened and people were curious to see if he could do it on purpose."

They had successfully "fainted" another boy and it had gone from there. "After the first night it happened pretty regularly every night with six or seven boys being fainted each evening over two to three weeks."

He did not think there was anything evil in the practice but decided to stop after both his mother and the biology master at Eton said fainting was bad for people.

The pupil who had acted as the guinea pig said he was "fainted" about ten times and



Nicholas Taylor: game started by accident

helped to do the same to others. "I witnessed faintings between 70 to 100 times over a few weeks." Asked why he did it, he said: "I'm not sure. It was different, not pleasant or unpleasant."

Asked if it had ever crossed his mind that someone could be strangled, he said: "Yes, slightly but not seriously." He said he did not worry about being caught. He did not believe Robert Topham, Baldwin's Bec House Master, would approve but did not "think he would take a strong line."

The boy said that Nicholas, whose parents, Liz and Malcolm, were at the inquest, had first indicated he would try to "faint" himself by tying his dressing gown cord to the met-

al door closer after other boys had refused to help him. "If no one was going to do it to him he would do it himself."

Mr Topham told the inquest the fainting game was generally carried out when he was having supper. He accepted that the boys had taken advantage of his absence. He had been "astonished" to find out about it and that he had not heard of the game until Nicholas's death.

Recording a verdict of misadventure, the coroner said it was clear that Nicholas wanted to continue fainting on his own. "He was doing what he intended willingly to do and it went wrong."

He said he found it difficult to criticise Eton College, whose staff could only do so much to look after the boys in their care. "Yes, they had an absolute duty, they are in loco parentis, but there is just so much they can do and no more. They are not prison officers." He could not see how the housemaster or senior prefects could have done more.

In a statement released after the inquest, John Lewis, Eton's Head Master, said Nicholas's death, which was an outright tragedy for the Taylor family, had also touched many people at the college.

"Those who were his friends or closely involved with him or who were caught up in the circumstances of his death have been greatly affected. The chief sympathy of everybody at Eton remains with Mr and Mrs Taylor and Nicholas's sister and brothers."

Mr Lewis said that since it had emerged that eight to ten boys in Baldwin's Bec were involved in induced fainting, House Masters had spoken to their boys in the strongest possible terms about the importance of not doing such things or allowing others to do them.

He emphasised that the coroner had said that he could not see that the House Master or the senior boys could have done more.



Nicholas's parents, Liz and Malcolm Taylor, yesterday

## Care that makes houses a home

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

THE pastoral system of care at Eton, based on 24 small houses, has been a feature of the school for generations. The choice of house and housemaster was the crucial factor in the decision to send Prince William and Prince Harry there.

Each of Eton's 1,200 boys has three adults looking after his welfare: a housemaster, a tutor and a dame — the school's term for a matron. Boys are also invited to consult two school doctors, five chaplains and a part-time counsellor.

The centre of school life is the house, where the housemaster and dame have the principal charge of a boy's welfare. Both are readily accessible and visit boys in their rooms in the evening. A senior boy acts as house captain, helping to maintain discipline and keeping the housemaster informed.

An inspection report by the Headmas-

ters' and Headmistresses' Conference last year described the house system as an "important and impressive feature of Eton". The inspectors said: "Housemasters are immensely caring and knowledgeable about their charges."

"They are people of authority of presence, yet possess a very personal touch without being overbearing."

All boys have their own study bedrooms, providing a degree of privacy unknown in some boarding schools but also making constant supervision impossible. Although there are common rooms, social-



Eton: was praised for welfare role

ising in the evenings often takes place in individuals' rooms.

Eton has had a series of highly publicised drugs cases but the HMC report was complimentary. "This is a civilised community of pupils who respect one another's independence and live together equitably. The overall ethos of the school is such that pupils generally feel secure in school and have confidence that any incidence of bullying is dealt with swiftly and effectively," it said.

The coroner seemed to endorse those findings at the inquest. He concluded that, although it was surprising that the boys should have engaged in such dangerous practices, he could not see that the housemaster or senior boys could have done more. "There is just so much they can do and no more. They are not prison officers."



Jenny Pitman smiling through the tears as she announces her retirement yesterday

## Pitman

Continued from page 1

But she began as a young lone female, parted from her husband, with a young family to bring up.

And she battered down the doors of prejudice by, it seems, sheer volume, and kept them open by sheer talent.

Her strident public persona was necessary at the time. These days, racing people can admire the quiet, classy ways of Venetia Williams, who has become one of the leading trainers over the past season or so. But the door was battered down by Williams and the other female trainers by the human tidal wave of Pitman.

There is a ham actor in her that loved the attention. She took on herself the role of strident, swaggering harriard, thigh-slapping her way across Lambourn full of pithy lines and salty words.

After the disaster of the Grand National false start, she summed up the occasion to perfection by calling the failed starting gate "sixty yards of knicker elastic".

She announced that if she got hold of a journalist who made an incorrect prediction "there is every chance of him being castrated". Her journo's crime was an incorrect prediction about one of her especially deeply beloved horses — and Pitman has only ever had two kinds of horse, deeply beloved and especially deeply beloved.

She survived a bout of cancer in recent months; but that, it seemed, had done nothing to dampen her fires of aggression, of love. She is a person who has always needed friends and family to love, and enemies to take on.

## Smoker's widow wins payout for cancelled heart surgery

THE widow of a man denied a heart bypass operation because he smoked five cigarettes a day has been given £40,000 in compensation.

John Gibson, 59, died of a heart attack ten months after the last-minute cancellation of a triple-bypass operation at Southampton General Hospital, Hampshire. As he was being prepared for surgery, his surgeon had asked him whether he had given up smoking.

When Mr Gibson replied "No" the doctor sent him home and told him that he could rejoin the NHS waiting list once he gave up.

Mr Gibson went on the waiting list at a different NHS hospital, but was unable to undergo the surgery before he died in November 1993.

His wife, Andrea, issued a writ against the Southampton and South West District Health Authority. The authority has agreed to an out-of-court settlement, but maintains that while Mr Gibson continued to smoke doctors considered that the risks of operating on him were too high. Mrs Gibson said: "It was a

devastating blow when he was turned down for the surgery and John was never the same again. When he died I lost everything — my husband and then my house. I am relieved that at last this whole unpleasant affair is over."

Mr Gibson had a history of health problems. He had smoked 20 cigarettes a day, but cut down to five when told he needed the operation.

Mrs Gibson, of Alton, Hampshire, said: "He was so nervous about the operation

and was very determined to give up so he wouldn't be put in the same situation again."

"I don't think he could believe [the operation] had stopped at the last minute and I don't think he could face going through it all again."

He went back on the waiting list at the Royal Brompton Hospital in London where he had more tests in June but died in the November."

Mr Gibson, an independent car trader who ran a letting agency with his wife, had pre-

viously always gone to a private hospital.

"He could have had the operation a week after the first tests for £11,000 but at the time we couldn't afford it and so went on the NHS," Mrs Gibson said. "The one time that he relied on the NHS he was let down abysmally."

The settlement with the health authority was reached without any acceptance of liability. A spokesman said: "The trust rejects allegations that this patient was refused treatment. His operation was deferred until he gave up smoking because the risks of operating while he continued to smoke were considered too high by the doctors."

"The decision ... was backed by the British Medical Association."

Simon Clark, a spokesman for the smokers' group FOR-EST, said: "Smokers are entitled to the same care and compassion as non-smokers. We can only hope that this case emphasises the considerable financial penalties which hospitals may face if they fail to treat smokers equally."



Andrea and John Gibson, who was refused a bypass

## Senior nurse rejected doctor's 'suggestion of euthanasia'

Acting matron left job after confrontation, reports Michael Horsnell



Bleasdale: senior nurse

A NURSE yesterday described her horror when a doctor in charge of an elderly patient had allegedly suggested euthanasia.

June Bleasdale, senior nurse at a nursing home, told the professional conduct committee of the General Medical Council that Ken Taylor had ordered her to stop the woman's food supplement and curtail her fluid intake. She made clear she would refuse. Mary Ormerod, 85, who had suffered several strokes, was taken off the supplement Fresubin on June 29, 1995, and died 58 days later at Oxford House, Preston, weighing 3st 12lb.

Mrs Bleasdale, who was deputising as matron, said that Dr Taylor

had asked her to accompany him to the room where the bedridden Mrs Ormerod was lying. He told her he had been approached by two of her daughters and then outlined his instructions while averting his gaze from the worried nurse.

She told the hearing: "He said he had been approached by two people. They were members of the family. He said they were both very distressed at their mother's ongoing situation ... that they were struggling with the fact that her condition was not getting any worse and they had dis-

cussed it. He said he wanted Fresubin stopped and her fluid regime to be curtailed from 200mls every two hours to between 20 and 50mls."

Mrs Bleasdale protested that the weather was "scorching" and that a reduction in fluid would soon cause dehydration in anybody. "I was horrified. I expressed my horror. I asked him to clarify exactly what he had said. He clarified it and he added that it was the 'quantity versus quality of life' in question. After he had repeated his instructions I asked if what he was saying was in fact euthanasia

and, if so, what he was saying was illegal. His next comment — I thought it was grotesque. He said, 'it's not as if she is going to do much'."

Mrs Bleasdale said she asked the doctor to accompany her to the office and made clear she would play no part in carrying out his instructions. "I emphatically said I will make no change in my own approach and that if he wished to make any written changes he should accompany me to the office and write in her care plan that I would not be a party to it."

Dr Taylor, 51, denies serious profes-

sional misconduct for allegedly ordering staff at the home to starve the patient and let her "slip away". Some staff defied him and continued to administer Mrs Ormerod's prescribed supplement until the supply ran out.

Mrs Bleasdale, who unexpectedly left her job at the nursing home four days after the meeting with the doctor, said that over preceding months there had been no significant change in the patient's condition, that she retained her ability to swallow and communicate by squeezing the nurses' hands. Mrs Bleasdale said that the doctor had not asked her views on Mrs Ormerod's condition.

The case continues.



Taylor: denies misconduct

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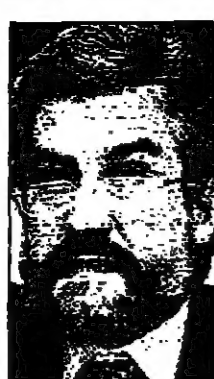


## COMMISSION IN CRISIS



**Jacques Santer**  
President of the  
Commission  
Luxembourg

Accused of setting up an off-shore company to dismantle North Sea oil platform with EU funding. Report said allegations were unfounded but accused his administration of mismanagement.



**Manuel Marin**  
Mediterranean, Near  
and Middle East  
Spain

Accused of nepotism by appointing his wife to a Commission post. Report found "no irregularity".



**Martin Bangemann**  
Industrial Affairs  
Germany

Untainted. Known for his lavish lifestyle and long lunches. He does not wish to be re-nominated, and is looking forward to his retirement.



**Sir Leon Brittan**  
External Relations  
Britain

Untainted. Response: Sir Leon said the report was "a disaster" which will "require speed and ruthless determination to deal with."



**Karel Van Miert**  
Competition Policy  
Belgium

Untainted. Response: denounced the report as unfair.

# Santer fails to comprehend his disgrace

FROM CHARLES BREMNER  
IN BRUSSELS

## THE COMMISSION

IN A fit of red-faced pique, Jacques Santer offered yesterday a glimpse of the psychic chasm that lies between the new management style desired by the European Union's reformers and the cosy old ways that sealed the downfall of the Brussels executive.

While Britain and other governments hailed what they saw as a healthy purge and the European Parliament basked in its role as democratic scourge, the genial President of the European Commission could not comprehend his political disgrace. "I am offended," he said. It was outrageous that the Commission had been accused by the independent inquiry of general irresponsibility, the most devastating charge levelled at his team on Monday. "This conclusion was perfectly unjustified."

The affair, he insisted, was the fault of the media which had "harassed" the Commission; it was, he suggested, the fault of unnamed enemies who had had a hand in drafting a wide condemnation that bore no relation to the meagre sins identified among his 19 Commissioners. That amounted, he said, to only one confirmed case of cronyism.

Mr Santer also pointed the finger straight at Jacques Delors, the French socialist whom he succeeded as Pres-

ident in 1995. Four of the six main cases of abuse identified had their origins in the Delors regime, he said. Mr Santer said the crisis should trigger reform, but he had personally been cleared and was ready to carry on as President.

In Parliament, down the hill from the Commission's headquarters, Alan Donnelly, leader of the British Labour group, said: "He is obviously in denial." Mr Santer's performance drew embarrassed laughter from career officials in the 17,000-strong institution. However, some EU civil servants share his view that the Commission is a victim of an "Anglo-Saxon political crusade".

A clash of European cultural tradition between north and south is visible in the struggle. Edith Cresson, the most disgraced Commissioner, deplored the way the Germans had joined the northerners in a Protestant crusade against

## LINKS

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/index_en.htm) — The European Commission  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/communication/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/communication/index_en.htm) — Profiles of the 20 Commissioners  
<http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/whatsnew.htm> — Statement by Jacques Santer  
<http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/whatsnew.htm> — The Committee of Independent Experts' report on fraud

the southern culture of state administration.

Mme Cresson has a point because it was Edward McMillan-Scott, now the Tory leader in the Parliament, who had opened the first fraud offensive eight years ago. The pressure for reform rose with a northward shift when Sweden and Finland joined in 1995.

The north-south differences were visible yesterday. Sauli Niinistö, the Finnish Finance Minister, hailed the mass resignation as "good news". Pierre Schödt, a leading member of the Swedish Government said: "What we have now is EU parliamentarism." Neil Kinnock, one of the British Commissioners, said the crisis "was a watershed and will ensure reform".

On the other side, Greece said it wanted the Santer team to stay on. Madrid regretted the unnecessary creation of an "institutional vacuum".

Taking a longer view, seasoned Brussels hands see the battle over the Commission as the consolidation of a shift in EU power to the Council of Ministers and Parliament. After a heady decade of empire-building under M Delors, the would-be unelected government of Europe had been brought well under the wing of the national governments.

Simon Jenkins: page 20  
Leading article and Letters: page 21



Jacques Santer, the President who is resigning with his Commission, attacks the report's conclusions at a Brussels press conference yesterday

## All-day fight fails to defeat the wolves

BY CHARLES BREMNER

AS THE dust settled yesterday from the collective exit of the Brussels executive, it emerged that Jacques Santer and his team had hoped until late on Monday night to stave off the fate of mass resignation.

The mood in the Commission was one of relative relief early that day after independent auditors had allowed individual Commissioners to read the sections dealing with their cases. The report found that none had been personally dishonest or had benefited from fraud.

Mr Santer had hoped to tough out the storm, casting one or two Commis-

sioners to Parliament's wolves. In the early evening that hope turned to crisis as the full report was turned over, with its devastating conclusions on the Commission's wholesale failure of leadership.

In a first round of meetings, some Commissioners argued for a mass exit as the only solution. Among those were Yves-Thibault de Silguy and Edith Cresson, the Commissioner held most personally responsible for wrongdoing. Mme Cresson insisted that there was no case for her to stand down alone, as suggested widely, Com-

mission sources said. "She acted as if she was no more involved than anyone," said a source.

However, the Commissioners reviewed several options, notably a suggestion from Sir Leon Brittan, the senior British Commissioner, for a selective cull that would remove Mr Santer and Mme Cresson, according to sources. Parliament's main political groups were calling for the same.

Ritt Bjerregaard, the combative Danish Commissioner, was on his own in seeking a mass fight against any resignations.

However, as the evening wore on, Parliament's dominant Socialist group heard that the French Government was backing Mme Cresson.

That prompted Pauline Green, the Socialist leader, to harden the parliamentary line, demanding the wholesale departure of the Commission.

Word of that demand amounted to a coup de grace for Mr Santer's team. Gathered in full session at 10.20pm, Commissioner after Commissioner took the floor, calling for a wholesale resignation.

Sir Leon described the situation yesterday as "a disaster" that requires speed and ruthless determination to deal with.

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# EXPOSE

**The barbaric treatment of dogs in Asia.**

WSPA has uncovered a shocking and disturbing story about the treatment of dogs in Asia. In a factory farm, thousands of dogs are kept in cramped, filthy cages. They are often starved, beaten, and killed for their organs, which are sold to wealthy people in Asia. The dogs are then thrown away, often in a public place. This is a barbaric and inhumane practice that we must stop.

**Help us stop this barbaric practice.**

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هكذا من الأصل



# COMMISSION IN CRISIS



**Hans van den Broek**  
Former Soviet Union,  
East and C. Europe  
The Netherlands

Untainted.  
His department has, however, been the subject of widespread criticism over misspent aid to Eastern and Central Europe.



**João de Deus Pinheiro**  
Africa, Caribbean and  
Pacific  
Portugal

Accused of nepotism.  
The report concluded:  
"It would have been prudent if he had not appointed his own brother-in-law."



**Padraig Flynn**  
Employment and  
Social Affairs  
Ireland

Untainted.  
Mr Flynn has, however, been seriously damaged by revelations that he accepted cash contributions for his party's elections campaigns.



**Marcelino Oreja**  
Institutional Affairs  
Spain

Untainted.  
Once described as the prototype of a "super-annuated commissioner."



**Anita Gradin**  
Immigration and  
Judicial Affairs  
Sweden

Untainted.  
Response: "We have to accept, even myself, some of the criticism. But it's a bit ironic that we were the first Commission to try to clean things up."

## Cresson is damned over dentist crony

By CHARLES BREMNER  
AND SUSAN BELL

EDITH CRESSON is the only Commissioner accused of nepotism — for having employed her long-standing dentist friend, Dr René Berthelot, in a fictitious post on a contract investigators called "manifestly irregular".

Charges against the Commission went far beyond Mme Cresson's fondness for appointing friends to important jobs and her indifference to abuses by subordinates, but it was her refusal to accept any blame before Parliament's inquiries that set in motion the events that led to the independent auditors' devastating report. For many MEPs, the

high-handed manner of the late President Mitterrand's one-time favourite symbolised all the sins that they saw in the Commission's culture of unaccountability.

Monday's report vindicated that view, damning her not only over her dentist friend, but also for, in effect, lying to Parliament and President Sauter over an emerging scandal in the training administration she headed.

The majority of missions the dentist undertook on Mme Cresson's instructions were to Châtelleraut, where the French Commissioner was Mayor until 1997, leading investigators to conclude that they could be considered "proof of the fictitious nature of his tasks". Out of 17 business trips, 13 were to Mme Cresson's fief, where he spent at least 41 days in the town at EC expense. The investigators found that he had barely 24 pages to show for 18 months' work, during which time he was paid £390,000 (about £39,000).

His message documentation, described in the report as "vague", never revealed properly the reason for his visits. In a letter to Dr Berthelot on July 26, 1995, offering him a six-month contract with the Commission as a "scientific adviser", no specific mission was

mentioned, despite EC instructions to the contrary. The letter refers to his "spontaneous application" for the post, despite his having been employed at Mme Cresson's request. His contract was extended until August 31, 1996 and again until February 28, 1997. When asked about his role by Parliament budget inspectors last October, Mme Cresson said: "As a politician, it seemed absolutely legitimate to call on external advisers, some of whom I know well."

As an exercise in self-destruction, the blunt-spoken socialist could hardly have done better than blame all her

troubles on "a German-inspired bid to damage France". In a belated attempt to deploy her untested charm with politicians and journalists, she sat in her Brussels flat recently, elegant in a silk trouser suit, and confided astonishment over "a mysterious and murky plot" to do her down.

Mme Cresson became France's first woman Prime Minister in May 1991 — and during a stormy ten months held the dubious distinction of being the most unpopular of the Fifth Republic.

There was speculation that M. Mitterrand's relationship with the fiery redhead went beyond mere friendship. When he ditched her in 1992, she blamed a "macho plot".



Cresson said that attacks on her were part of a "murky" German-inspired plot to damage France

## Gravy train trundles on

By CHARLES BREMNER

### RETIREMENT DEALS

THE Commissioners now leaving Brussels may have lost political face, but they can probably count on comfortable retirements, thanks to the lavish traditions of Brussels.

Although service for a full five-year term is normally required to qualify for full pension rights, it is thought that the outgoing team will enjoy most of the usual benefits. Under staff rules, a departing Commissioner gets 22.5 per cent of final salary for life, which amounts to nearly £30,000 a year.

Commissioners are also eligible to receive half their £125,000 basic salary for three years, to enable them to re-adjust to normal life. On top of that they get allowances of up to £6,000 a year to cover their families. The total for the

golden handshake, if paid in full, would amount to about £300,000 per Commissioner for the period of the next three years.

This gravy train of golden handshakes and life-long gold-plated pensions is likely to come to a halt under staff reforms that will emerge from the onslaught from the Parliament and member states.

The most scandalous abuse has been the provision that allows senior Commission officials to enjoy high proportions of their salary even when forced to resign in disgrace. Under an article of the existing staff regulations Commission staff can be forced to take early retirement but are still guaranteed incomes may be considered lavish.



Berthelot: 24-page report took him 18 months

□ Javier Solana: Spanish former Foreign Minister is favourite. His widely held belief that the job should go to a socialist from a southern European state.  
□ Romano Prodi: Italian former Prime Minister admired for enforcing rigour required to enable Italy to qualify for euro membership. But as a centrist politician he may not be socialist enough.  
□ Antonio Guterres: Said to be one of Tony Blair's favourites, the Portuguese Prime Minister is an exponent of the New Labour-style "third

way". He says he does not want the job.

□ Giuliano Amato: Italian former Prime Minister. Hampered by ties with Bettino Craxi, the exiled socialist leader wanted by the police.

□ Felipe González: Spanish socialist former Prime Minister is tainted by scandals over anti-terrorist death squads.

□ Wim Kok: Dutch Prime Minister says he does not want the job. But his candidature may please Germany. Dutch economy has emerged as a healthy left-wing model, with low unemployment.



## EXPOSED!

### The barbaric treatment of dogs in Asia.

WSPA has uncovered gruesome practices in Asia's factory farms, where dogs are bred to meet the intense demand for pets. The dogs are crammed so tightly into cages that their limbs are intertwined. Disease and starvation are rife. Some have their vocal cords cut to reduce noise. Many end up slaughtered for meat by being electrocuted or even skinned alive. WSPA is working to end these barbaric practices and introduce stronger animal protection laws throughout Asia. But we desperately need your support.

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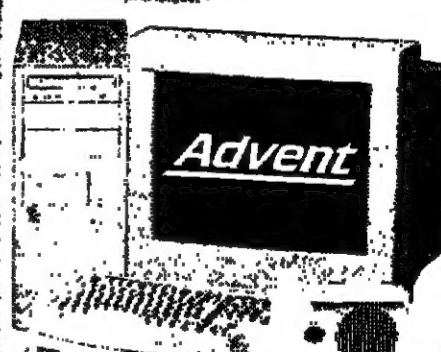
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## COMMISSION IN CRISIS



**Edith Cresson**  
Science and  
Research  
France

Accused of nepotism. Report found that the appointment of her dentist friend to a Commission post was a clear-cut case of favouritism. Response: "I have no regrets."



**Ritt Bjerregaard**  
Environment  
Denmark

Untainted. Disliked for criticising colleagues. Seen as bad appointment.



**Monika Wulf-Mathies**  
Regional policy  
Germany

Accused of nepotism. Report found that the appointment of a friend to a Commission post "bordered on inappropriate procedure". A former trade unionist and unlikely to be renominated.



**Neil Kinnock**  
Transport  
Britain

Untainted. Response: "By doing what we did last night we made a clean break. It will lead to firmer management."



**Mario Monti**  
Internal Market  
Italy

A respected economist who has advocated streamlining welfare and subsidies.

# Sober North beats EU's siesta South

FROM ROGER BOYES  
IN BONN

WHEN Gerhard Schröder, whose presidency of the European Union looks pretty much out of control, held talks with Tony Blair in London last night, they naturally discussed a Third Way manifesto which is supposed to set out a modernising brief for Europe.

Mineral water was drunk. As in Herr Schröder's trip to Denmark, Sweden and Finland, a sober time was had by all, for the Protestant North is celebrating a moral (though probably pyrrhic) victory over the Catholic South.

The collapse of the European Commission represents — if one is to believe the Germans and the Swedes and the Dutch — a triumph of Sierra focus group social democracy over siesta socialism.

There is a grander way of explaining events in Europe. Carolingian Europe, represented by the likes of Jacques Delors, Helmut Kohl and François Mitterrand, is giving way to a Europe more concerned with good housekeeping than compelling vision.

The old joke about a visitor gazing up at the Berlaymont building and asking: "Who

works there?" — answer: "about 20 per cent of the inhabitants" — probably had a 9th-century equivalent.

Now that Protestant bean-counting prime ministers have replaced Catholic leaders, the Franco-German Rhineland axis has never looked weaker and the rich are wondering why, in the absence of a big European idea, they should be paying for the South when their real strategic interests seem to lie in the East.

From the beginning the European Union was something like an extended Sicilian family. Its social dynamic was built on favours, horse-trading and a steady flow of cash. The family survives because it shares its prosperity and is always ready to expand. The stronger members of the family protect the imbecile child or the unmarried daughter.

The critical figure in the hierarchy is the mother, a conciliator who feeds, arbitrates, redistributes and keeps a rough emotional balance in the family. In Europe-as-family the Commission played the role of mama, the great dispenser of favours. Plainly the south Eu-

ropeans saw little wrong with the Commission that created networks of allegiance: a Commission post was the lucrative reward for wrong-footed politicians and their primary job on arriving in Brussels was to hand out lucre to friends and allies. The divide, however, is crumbling, as is the family metaphor.

In Germany everyday culture has become closer to the old Club Med clichés. Trains never run on time, craftsmen are sloppy, the delivery schedule for a new bed is typically five weeks with no certainty as to when the furniture will arrive on the doorstep.

Bribes and backhanders have become part of the civic culture.

The price of a driving licence in Frankfurt, according to an investigation, is a 1,000 mark (£333) bribe for a motorbike licence and 2,000 marks for a lorry licence. In Berlin, Frankfurt or Munich one can jump the queue for a council flat with a bribe of 6,000 marks.

Tony Blair comes to Aachen in May to pick up the Charlemagne prize for European statesmanship. He might care to reflect on the rotten state of the Union.



Spring blossom among the national flags outside the European Parliament building in Brussels yesterday

# Shake-up in Europe was 'absolutely right'

□ Britain: Tony Blair told MPs at Westminster it was "absolutely right" for the Commission to have resigned en masse after the report revealed a "sad catalogue of negligence and mismanagement". Ministers want to reappoint the two British Commissioners, Sir Leon Brittan and Neil Kinnock.

□ Germany: Bonn, desperate to keep a grip on its flagging presidency of the European Union, is urging its partners to keep the present Commission in place until after June's elections to the European Parliament. It fears that the Berlin summit on March 24 to overhaul Europe's finances will be derailed.

□ France: Press reaction focused on the downfall of Edith Cresson — "Shameful Cresson" said *France-Soir*.

□ Ireland: The collapse of the EU Commission provides the Irish Government with a perfect excuse for removing Pádraig Flynn from office. Mr Flynn, the former EU Social Affairs Commissioner, is a source of embarrassment as he faces allegations of receiving £50,000 in secret payments from a builder.

□ Italy: Commentators combined relief that the two Italian EU Commissioners had been "absolved" of fraud, nepotism and corruption with anxiety over the future fate of European integration.

□ Spain: The official Spanish response was muted, principally because the Foreign Minister, Abel Matutes, was singled out for criticism for

his period as a commissioner. Manuel Marín, the Spanish vice-president of the Commission, was deemed to have been cleared of allegations of nepotism and failing to deal with corruption, although his wife remains a member of his staff.

□ Portugal: The Government said that João de Deus Pinheiro, in charge of relations with Africa and the Caribbean, will go when the new Commission is announced. Senhor Deus Pinheiro has employed his wife and his brother-in-law at the Commission.

□ Finland: The Prime Minister, Paavo Lipponen, whose country assumes the EU presidency in July, welcomed the resignation of the Commission members.

□ Sweden: The Prime Minister, Göran Persson, said the

resignation "clears the air... transparency has arrived in the EU to stay".

□ Denmark: The Foreign Minister, Niels Helveg Petersen, said: "The Commission has a clear responsibility for some of the irregularities that have taken place. The Commission had no other choice but to resign."

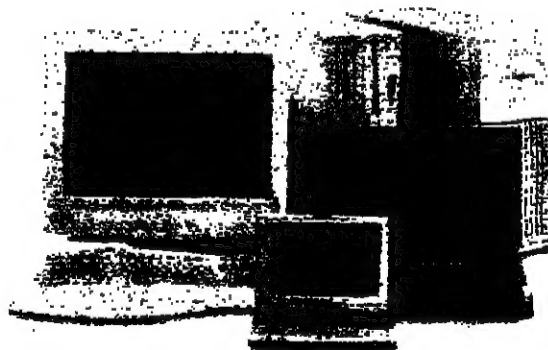
□ Belgium: The Commission was widely praised for its decision to resign, but there was widespread resentment over the way that it had been forced out by the sins of individual Commissioners.

□ Luxembourg: Officials depicted Mr Santer as a scapegoat. An honest man had fallen victim to a power struggle between the Commission and the Parliament.

## THE CONSTITUTION

Legal experts in Brussels and European Union capitals have been busy in the last few days. Many of them are now preparing the resignation of some or all of the Commissioners who resigned on Monday (Michael Gwynne writes). Their resignation will be formally received, however, by MEPs and others called for a statement of the entire Commission. They agree that the governing Council under it should not be seen as endorsing the Commission's resignation. It should be seen as a necessary step to ensure that the Commission can be reconstituted as an independent body, and that an entirely new Commission must be chosen. The argument turns on words in Article 1 of the Treaty of Rome, and the amendments to it.

European Union officials said that the Commission was "unhappy to resign". But in recent weeks, the Commission had been accused of fraud, nepotism, corruption and other irregularities. Legal experts in Brussels and other EU capitals have been busy in the last few days.



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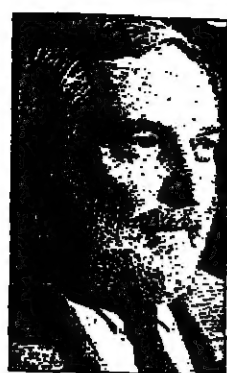
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## COMMISSION IN CRISIS



**Franz Fischler**  
Agriculture  
Austria

Untainted by the scandal. Response: agreed to the mass resignation out of solidarity with fellow Commissioners.



**Emma Bonino**  
Consumer affairs and humanitarian aid  
Italy

Untainted. Response: she described the mass resignation as a "political gesture" and the commissioners as "martyrs" in the European cause.



**Yves-Thibault de Silguy**  
Economic affairs  
France

Untainted. A graduate of France's elite administrative university, Ecole Nationale d'Administration, he has the traditional haughty bearing of the French political elite.



**Erkki Liikanen**  
Budget  
Finland

Accused of abusing his position to secure EU contracts for his wife. Report found the allegations "were unfounded".



**Christos Papoulias**  
Energy  
Greece

Untainted. Little known outside Greece, he hopes to use his commission job as a stepping stone to the more coveted prize of Greek Prime Minister.

# Blair says merit must decide who gets the top jobs

BY ROLAND WATSON  
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR last night proposed sweeping changes to the personnel, management and culture of the European Commission as he used the power vacuum in Brussels to press the case for reform.

The Prime Minister handed his plans to Gerhard Schröder, the German Chancellor, in Downing Street last night in the hope that they would be tabled for debate at next week's Berlin summit. Downing Street and Foreign Office staff have been working on the proposals for some months, but seized their moment yesterday after the mass resignation of the 20 European commissioners on Monday night.

In a Commons statement, Mr Blair told MPs the proposals were designed to deal with the "systemic failings in the commission" which he said had been tolerated for too

long. His officials stressed that reform, and speedy reform at that, was critical to repairing the credibility of the commission. The Prime Minister's official spokesman compared the Brussels bureaucracy to "Lambeth council in the 1980s".

Mr Blair himself highlighted the way senior officials were appointed as one of the key areas. "The top jobs should go to the top people," Mr Blair told the Commons. "Merit and merit alone should decide." His comments were aimed at the quota system which tries to share senior posts around the 15 member states.

At the two top levels, the 229 posts are shared out roughly according to population. Britain has seven grade A1 officials and 23 at grade A2, the same as Germany, whereas Greece has two and six respec-

tively and Finland has one and five. At other levels the quota system is less rigid, but remains semi-official.

In contrast, the British proposals stress the need for transparency at all levels, and appointment based on a proven ability to do the job.

As part of a "new contract" between the commission and the Council of Ministers, the paper includes proposals to make director-generals, the senior civil servants who head each of the commission's departments, much more closely accountable for their department's record.

The report which sparked the mass resignation of commissioners highlighted the lack of responsibility among officials for either their budget or the effect of their department's measures. The British paper suggests that Brussels adopts a relationship between officials and the Council of Ministers similar to that in the UK where Whitehall permanent secretaries are accountable to Parliament.

The British plan would also slim down the Brussels bureaucracy, particularly at senior level, over a number of years. Mr Blair told MPs: "There will, no doubt, be those who see this as just another chance to bash Europe. Intelligently seen, this is in fact an opportunity to make changes which many of us believe and have argued are long overdue."

Simon Jenkins, page 20  
Leading article, page 21

### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- All senior appointments to be made on merit, and not according to the semi-official quota system which seeks to ensure that all 15 countries are fairly represented.
- Top civil servants to be directly accountable for the performance of their departments.
- An independent fraud office with full powers of investigation.

- Stricter guidelines on the awarding of outside contracts.
- Stricter employment contracts, making it easier to move or dismiss under-performing officials.
- A complete overhaul of the approval and auditing of the commission, coupled with a new system for financial management and spending programmes.



Tony Blair and Gerhard Schröder outside 10 Downing Street yesterday, where the two leaders met for talks

## Inherent flaws may prevent reform

TONY BLAIR talked tough over the European Commission. That was both right in itself and politically necessary. Far-reaching changes are required both in the leadership of the commission and its structure. But can Mr Blair deliver?

In the past, the commission has brushed aside charges of fraud and mismanagement. Responsibility has been evaded, the sums involved have been dismissed as trivial and blame has been shifted to member countries.

Unusually for a European document, the latest report is clearly written and blunt. The indictment against Edith Cresson for favouritism and for failing to act in response to "known serious and continuing irregularities" is damning. Jacques Santer's errors

Peter RIDDLE  
ON POLITICS

were of omission rather than commission. But he is criticised for neglect and his attempt to shrug off responsibility was pathetic.

The new President must, in Mr Blair's words, be "a political heavyweight". The European leaders may appoint a high-quality replacement this time in response to the crisis.

However, the system of appointing commissioners is inherently flawed. As long as nominations of commissioners are made by member states and the allocation of portfolios, including the Presi-

dent, results from haggling among heads of government, merit will come a distant second to domestic political factors. Who has to be rewarded, fobbed off, etc? Mr Blair has rejected any change in the system of nomination.

The Prime Minister made a number of sensible and overdue suggestions about improving methods of financial control and management. Some can be implemented quickly without treaty changes.

Reform of multinational organisations is, however, never straightforward, as has been shown at the UN in New York and its various agencies. Appointments and promotions are fixed in relation to national quotas, to ensure that states, particularly smaller ones, have a "fair" share. That works against giving "the top

jobs to the top people". In a perverse way, the European Commission, like the UN, represents a careful balancing of various national interests rather than the nucleus of a European super-state where national identities do not matter. Changing the culture will be hard since any criticism of a senior official can be presented as an attack on any member country.

Mr Blair argued that this time his call for reform had echoes across Europe. It may have in the short term. But the latest upheavals — and Mr Blair's response — have raised the stakes. Reform of the commission has now become a crucial part of the Government's campaign to convince the British public of the advantages of Europe ahead of the referendum on the euro.

## Hague seeks new code of conduct

COMMONS DEBATE

BY JAMES LANDALE  
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

WILLIAM HAGUE demanded a binding code of conduct for the appointment of senior officials within the commission yesterday.

Replying to Tony Blair's statement in the Commons, the Tory leader welcomed the Prime Minister's proposals but said: "Will you consider adding to your list a binding code of conduct to prevent personal appointments of commissioners and to stamp out nepotism, and an agreement that the Parliament should be allowed to sack individual commissioners guilty of misconduct?"

At present, the Parliament can demand the resignation of the entire commission. Mr Hague added that a declaration of financial interests should be established for individual commissioners.

John Major, the former Tory Prime Minister, said: "What this report throws up is an institutional problem that has long existed in the EU. Isn't one of the most important reforms, many years overdue, a clear-cut financial accountability by the commission ideally to the member states of the EU or to a body that reports directly to the member states?"

Sir Edward Heath, the former Tory Prime Minister, said that the most important thing to recognise was that it was "the first time the European Parliament has been prepared to act decisively. Things will never be the same again."

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# Hope fades for new breed of 'loser lads'

By ADAM SHERWIN

BRITAIN has produced a class of "loser lads" who believe they will fail at school, work and life, a survey claims. Although magazines aimed at young men, such as *Loaded*, promote a world of consumer-based fun, the real experiences of "losers" are very different. Teenage boys are struggling to make a mark on a society that places increasing value on the skills of women, says the study from the *Tomorrow's Men* project supported by Oxford University. As a result, more are drifting into crime and may contemplate suicide.

The survey was based on anonymous interviews with 1,400 males, aged 13 to 19, from across Britain. The aim was to understand their hopes, worries and experiences by asking them about parents, school, work and gender equality. The study, funded by the clothing retailer Topman, found that many adolescents had low self-esteem, which was illustrated by lack of confidence, self-motivation or optimism. The absence of a father, or a father figure, was key to starting this process. Schools in which teachers ignored the problems of boys and failed to implement an anti-bullying policy exacerbated negative feelings.

Such boys, who fall into a category called "Low Can-do" in the report, amounted to 12 per cent of the sample. Of them, 20 per cent have been in trouble with the police, 17 per cent are deeply alienated from school and 11 per cent are depressed or even suicidal.

Boys in this group often respond to their predicament and the success of young women by over-emphasising "macho" behaviour in front of women. They also find it hardest to accept women's emerging equality at work and at home and may try to encourage girlfriends to give up their aspirations.

The survey also found that

25 per cent of boys, described as "Can-do", are positive and motivated. The researchers say, however, "Meeting the needs of 'Low Can-do' boys is urgent for they show a range of behaviours that impact on society."

The youths questioned for the report were invited to respond to newspaper adverts and questionnaires sent to schools and youth clubs.

A sample of boys who took part agreed to speak about their experiences. Sam, 16, said: "I got kicked out of sixth-form college. The tutors said I wasn't doing as well as the others and they thought I should leave. I am now working on a farm." Sam felt that girls had an advantage at school. "They

become teachers' pets. Boys seem to get into more trouble," he said. Parents had a role to play, said Piran, 16. "If parents encourage you then it helps you to believe that you can achieve. Mine did." Danny, a 17-year-old, said: "You fail an induction test at school, and the teachers say you are a failure. They do not show an interest after that."

Danny wanted to achieve despite the example of his parents. "They have not made much of their lives. I don't really want to go the same way."

"I would have preferred to stay on at college but now I have to find a job. There is nothing on the cards at the job-centre for me. But I want to break out of my family loop." He had no role models to look up to, or to go to for advice. "Every older male relative I know is on the dole."

Adrienne Katz, the project's research director, believes that the plight of teenage boys can only be understood by listening to them. "We need to hear their views," she said.

"Boys can be decisive and proud. They are also funny and loyal, but a number lack confidence."



Some of the teenagers who took part in the survey, which found that many suffered from low self-esteem. Only a quarter felt optimistic about their prospects



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Denise Lewis with her MBE insignia: "When I saw the Queen there was this wave of emotion - I didn't know what to say"

## Athlete adds MBE to her medal haul

By A CORRESPONDENT

THE athlete Denise Lewis was as nervous receiving the insignia of her MBE from the Queen yesterday as she was when on the starting line at a championship.

"I calmed myself down as I was waiting but when I saw the Queen there was this wave of emotion and I didn't really know what to say to her," she said at Buckingham Palace.

The gold medalist in last year's European and Commonwealth heptathlons said her honour was "beautiful and fantastic". She was accompanied by her mother, Joan, her grandmother, Edna, and her boyfriend, Jonathan Kron.

Miss Lewis, 26, said she was training hard to achieve her goal of a gold medal at the Sydney Olympics next year.

The actress Maureen Lipman, who was appointed a CBE, said the occasion had lifted her spirits. "I was feeling rather ill on the way here and thought I wouldn't be able to go up and get the award. I told my mother she

would have to go up instead and she said she would but only if she could wear my hat. But it's amazing how getting a CBE can cheer you right up," said Miss Lipman, 52, who received the award for services to comedy and drama.

Also with her were her daughter and her husband, the playwright Jack Rosenthal, who in 1993 was appointed CBE. "We are now a two-commander family - we should be looking for a frigate," the actress joked.

The former England football captain and Newcastle United player Stuart Pearce received the insignia of the MBE. "The Queen seemed to be very knowledgeable about football but she didn't mention if she was a fan," he said.

The broadcast journalist Trevor Phillips, 45, who was appointed OBE, said it was remarkable how "unstuffy" the investiture was. Nicholas Serota, the director of the Tate Gallery, was knighted for services to the visual arts.

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## Time is up for the traditional lunch hour

By ALEXANDRA FREAN  
SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
CORRESPONDENT

THE traditional lunch "hour" is disappearing from the working day as more employees say they are too busy to take a break.

A study, published today by the British Heart Foundation, says that the culture of long hours dominant in the workplace is putting excessive pressures on people's health, depriving them of rest, relaxation and exercise and making them fat.

More than half of workers surveyed said they took less than 30 minutes for lunch. Women are the most pressured, with a third saying that they did not have a lunch break at all.

More than a third of the 659 between 25 and 50 said they believed that work was adversely affecting their health. Of these, nearly a third said that they had gained weight because of their job.

# Ladies enter the Long Room



Winning team: Jackie Court, Sheila Hill, Rachael Heyhoe Flint, Netta Rheinberg, Norma Izard, in the front row; and behind them, Diana Rait Kerr, Carole Cornthwaite and Audrey Collins, in the Long Room yesterday

## The male preserve at Lord's falls as the MCC names its first women members, reports Claudia Joseph

TWO former England cricket captains strode into the Long Room yesterday when the first women members of the MCC entered that hallowed hall of Lord's.

The club, which last year finally voted to admit women to its ranks, yesterday named its first ten honorary women members. Eight were at Lord's yesterday, including Rachael Heyhoe Flint, who led the national team for ten years, and Carole Cornthwaite, captain in the 1980s. Betty Archdale, who 65 years ago captained the first England women's touring team to Australia and New Zealand, is also among the ten.

Mrs Heyhoe Flint, 59, recalled that the late cricket commentator Brian Johnston had predicted yesterday's achievement. She said: "I might be referred to as the catalyst because in 1991 I had the temerity to apply to become a member. I wish Johnners was here today because he kept saying to me: 'It will eventually happen but I doubt whether I shall see it in my lifetime.' This means as much to me as when I played here for the first time in 1976 against Australia."

The ten, chosen by a sub-committee, also include Sheila Hill, former chairman of the Women's Cricket Association; Umpires and Scorers Sub-Committee; Diana Rait Kerr, former curator of the MCC

museum; Netta Rheinberg, former secretary of the Women's Cricket Association; Edna Barker, former captain of South of England; Audrey Collins and Norma Izard, former presidents of the association; and Jackie Court, capped for England 40 times.

Many names had been considered, said Roger Knight, the MCC secretary, and no one disputed that the ten should be members. Mrs Cornthwaite, a senior coach and England Under-21s selector, who took a record 25 catches in Test matches, said she had had no idea she was to be admitted.

The arrival of women at Lord's marks the culmination of a long campaign by Mr Johnston and Sir Tim Rice to admit female members. Yesterday Sir Tim said it had taken time to win people round. "I never wanted to steam in and say — you have to do this. The MCC has an image of crusty old chaps, but it's not."

MCC members will also be allowed to invite women guests to matches. The first MCC women's team will take to the field on May 11 in East Molesey, Surrey. Lord Cowdrey of Tonbridge, the former England captain, said: "I think it's a wonderful day and I look forward to the day when the MCC ladies team makes a big impact in the game."

President's welcome, page 46

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Molester GP cleared of rape

Jurors cleared a family doctor of raping a girl of 15 yesterday, then gasped when they discovered that he was awaiting sentence for molesting her. At Manchester Crown Court, Dominic Jackson, 47, who ran a surgery in Adswold, near Stockport, had admitted indecent assault but opted to face a jury on the more serious charge. The jury was not told of the guilty plea until Maurice Greene, for the prosecution, stood to tell the court once they had delivered their verdict. Sentence on Jackson, who now lives in Slough, Berkshire, was adjourned for reports.

### Hidden treasure

A little-known Georgian mansion has been voted Britain's favourite historic house. Pen-carrow House, near Bodmin, Cornwall, is the home of the Molesworth-St Aubyn family. It was honoured in the National Heritage Awards.

### Art sold as scrap

A £250,000 working sculpture by the late Rowland Ematt, *A Quiet Afternoon in Cloud Cuckoo Valley*, which was stolen from a warehouse in Hertfordshire, was recovered when a dealer reported that he had paid £100 for it for scrap.

### Health crust

A former butcher whose pork pies helped to make him a millionaire has left most of his £6 million estate to Doncaster Royal Infirmary and Montagu Hospital NHS Trust. Fred Green, 95, had sold his business to Asda.

## Buyers promise to live with peals

By SIMON DE BRUNELLES

THE buyers of 12 expensive homes being built in a south Devon village will be required to sign a pledge promising not to complain about the bells of the 13th-century All Saints Church less than 50 yards away.

Parish councillors in Thurlestone in South Hams mounted the pre-emptive strike against the city folk likely to snap up the £345,000 houses because local people were worried that they might have unrealistic expectations of peace and quiet. After Rock in Cornwall, Thurlestone is the most expensive resort in the South West. One resident said: "There is a very exclusive golf club and in the summer there are more big industrialists there than at the CBI conference."

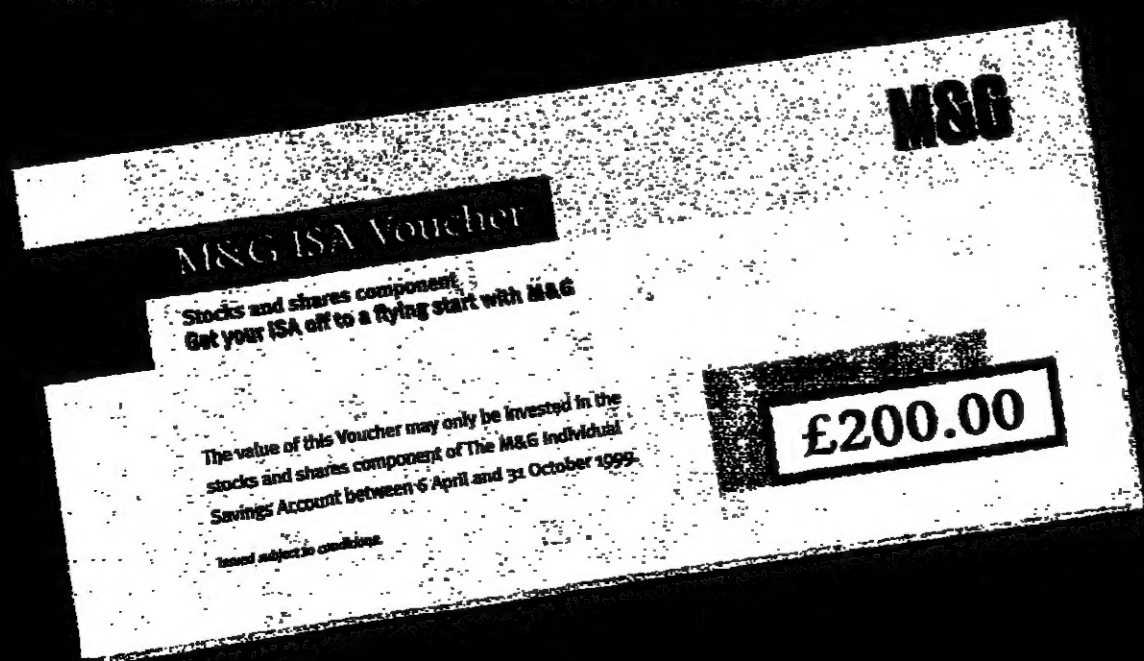
Buyers of the three new homes and the nine converted from cattle sheds must endure 90 minutes of bell-ringing practice every Thursday evening, as well as peals during Sunday services, weddings and funerals.

The special clause was written into the deeds of the new homes at the request of the parish council and the parochial church council, and will bar all future owners from taking any legal action against the bells.

Derrick Yeoman, a parish councillor who has been a bell-ringer all his life, said: "There have been many cases of people moving into the countryside and then complaining about the noises or smells."

"We feel that those who come to live among us should accept our ways."

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# Police stations on the move

## Police may be told to close redundant stations

Survey of the efficiency of property police stations in England and Wales

How The Times previewed the report in September

## Audit Commission says buildings are out of date and in the wrong place, reports Stewart Tendler

TOO many police stations are out of date, under-used and in the wrong place, according to the Audit Commission. Police buildings worth at least £110 million are already up for sale and the commission believes that forces could find millions more to bolster their budgets in a rationalisation programme in England and Wales.

In a report published today the commission suggests that instead of traditional stations, police could share centres with fire brigades or neighbouring forces and make use of video links for routine inquiries. The commission found that "there is a poor fit between the estate and the demands of operational policing in the 21st century". Buildings are in the wrong place because of population shifts, often from city centres; they are the wrong size or are incompatible with modern computer technology.

The report, *Action Stations*, states that the police have 2,700 operational sites and 4,000 police houses or flats in England and Wales worth a minimum of £2.6 billion. A fifth of the 2,000 stations were built before 1951 and only 13 per cent have been built since 1980. Forces have tried to save money by postponing maintenance and repairs, costing £205 million are needed.

Forces admitted to the commission that 9 per cent of stations were in the wrong place.

One in Hertford is hard to reach because of a new traffic system. Police in Gateshead closed a rural station on the edge of the town because it had not had a visit from the public for 12 months.

Even when forces build new stations to match shifts in population, they can still get it wrong. One spent £5 million for a station on the outskirts of a city to service a new development but the expansion never came.

Looking at public needs, the commission quotes a survey by the Northamptonshire force which found that less than 4 per cent of 300 visitors to stations went to report a crime; lost and found inquiries were the main business. Many urban stations get a lot of people asking for directions, and the commission found that few forces had responded with the obvious solution of putting a map outside.

The commission found that two thirds of stations are open to the public but that only 25 per cent are open 24 hours a day. Nine hundred have cells but only 600 are currently 24-hour custody centres. Inside the stations, up to 30 per cent of space can be lost to non-operational functions such as canteens and gymnasiums. A survey of 12 stations found that on average they had 16 per cent of their space unused.

Looking to the future, the



On the road to the future: the Pulse caravan that replaced the Birtley police station is not universally popular

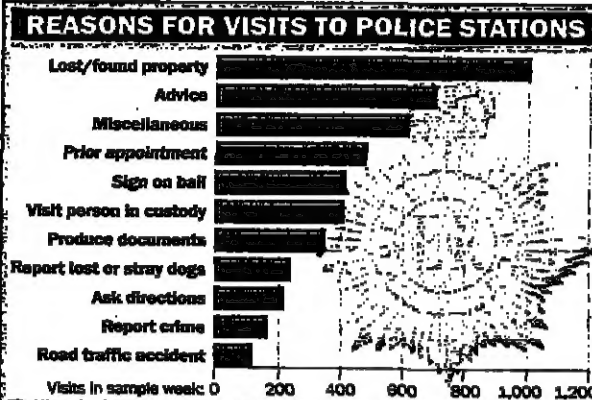
commission points to an "interactive" police box opened by Lothian and Borders Police in Princes Street, Edinburgh. The former police box now provides a 24-hour service to the public with a touch-sensitive screen providing emergency messages and maps. It has a two-way link to enable callers to talk to an officer. The box had 32,000 callers in the first two months of operation.

The commission also praises Greater Manchester Police for a property review which concluded that it had 20 per cent more accommodation than it needed. The force plans to close 15 stations and make use of "interactive" links.

Sussex Police has opened a new patrol centre for Eastbourne in an industrial unit on the edge of the town. This has removed overcrowding in the town's central station and put operational staff together.

Commenting on the report, Andrew Foster, Controller of the Audit Commission, said: "If police forces are to meet the public's expectations of a modern and accessible service, they need to extract greater value from their buildings before the passing of time turns them into liabilities."

Welcoming the commission's findings, Paul Boateng, Minister of State at the Home Office, said better management of buildings would benefit the public and release millions of pounds for frontline policing.



## Rural office is closed but the beat goes on

By Stewart Tendler and Paul Wilkinson

IN 12 months not one member of the public crossed the threshold of Birtley police station on the outskirts of Gateshead in Northumbria. Outside there was a telephone enabling people to call a control centre when the station was unmanned, but no one used that either. Yet the area suffered from low-level disorder.

Today the police win praise from the Audit Commission for the way they replaced the station with an operation called Pulse, in which a police caravan tours local communities. The report says that the force managed the change without incurring hostility from the public. However, that is not a universal view.

Kathy King, a Liberal Democrat councillor, said: "It was one of the most unpopular decisions ever in Birtley. The station was used by the police. Everyone knew the bobbies and the bobbies knew us. Everyone, especially elderly people, felt safe in the knowledge that we had two officers looking out for us. Now our nearest station is eight miles away, you have to wait up to an hour for a policeman to turn up at your door. Crime has increased. People feel deserted."

There was an overlap of six months to try out the change. The caravan is a base for patrols, crime-prevention advice and discussions on crime problems. It spends one or two days at each site on a six-

month rota. The sites were picked as problem areas. When the team of five officers is on patrol, the caravan is manned by a civilian. Officials from council housing, engineering, welfare and education departments can attend.

Ms King said: "There are more than 15,000 residents in Birtley and surrounding areas who relied on the station for protection. People like to be able to see a policeman. On Friday night, shop windows in Birtley High Street were smashed after a skirmish outside a pub and it was an age before the police turned up."

"We are assigned beat officers but with shift-change patterns they are nowhere near at the times when we need them most."

Superintendent Brian Graham, the chief of the Gateshead West division, said: "In my view the community-type office was not working. It was easier for people to ring from home than to travel to the station to do the same thing. The only time police officers were there was when they were catching up on community activities or paperwork."

"We set up the Pulse unit to provide effective policing in the area. We hold four ward surgeries a month in Birtley so people can meet a police officer face to face if they want to. It has had a favourable response from the public and crime is falling as a result."

## New law to crack down on juvenile delinquents

By Richard Ford, Home Correspondent

CHILDREN as young as 12 will be a main target of a new government measure aimed at curbing harassment and bad behaviour on housing estates and the streets.

From April 1, police and local authorities will be able to apply to the courts for Anti-social Behaviour Orders, which bar individuals from causing harassment, alarm or distress to others.

Professional witnesses will be used to gather evidence in support of applications against youths and adults involved in persistent abuse against homosexuals, ethnic

minorities, the elderly, the mentally ill or the disabled. The orders will also be used against families who terrorise estates that they consider to be their "patch", intimidating neighbours and forcing residents to move away.

The maximum term for the order will be for two years and a breach will be a criminal offence punishable by up to five years in prison.

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, said that the orders were intended to tackle the failure of people including parents to take responsibility for their own or their children's actions.

"We would expect them to be used quite routinely against that middle range of 12 to 17-year-olds, where experience shows they may go on to commit serious acts of antisocial behaviour, some times with adult assistance, sometimes without," he said.

Mr Straw told a conference at Westminster that the Government would not allow the perceived lack of recreational facilities for young people to be used as an excuse for antisocial behaviour, by which teenagers intimidate the public and spoil the quality of people's lives.

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# FBI to oversee Ulster bomb investigation

THE RUC has taken the unprecedented step of asking an English police officer and the American FBI to oversee the investigation into the car-bomb murder of Rosemary Nelson in order to counter republican allegations of RUC collusion.

David Phillips, Kent's Chief Constable, is to head the investigation and late on Monday night Sir Ronnie Flanagan, the RUC's Chief Constable, contacted Louis Freeh, the FBI director, to invite FBI participation. The FBI's exact role has yet to be decided but it will contribute independence as well as expertise.

Sir Ronnie is determined not only to track down the killers of the prominent lawyer, but to disprove the Sinn Féin charges that the RUC was itself party to the murder. He said that there would be no constraints placed on Mr Phillips and that his investigation would not only be "the most meticulous it can be, but transparently obvious as such".

The Red Hand Defenders, a loyalist splinter group, has claimed responsibility for the murder but Sinn Féin spokesmen continued to accuse the RUC of collusion yesterday and mounted demonstrations outside police stations.

Sinn Féin has been cam-

**Outsiders enlisted  
to meet need for  
a transparent  
inquiry, report  
Martin Fletcher  
and Ian Brodie**

paing furiously for the RUC to be disbanded. It seized on Mrs Nelson's past claims to have been threatened by RUC officers and said the RUC had rejected her request for protection even though her work for high-profile republican clients made her an obvious target.

"It is intolerable that the RUC who threatened Rosemary Nelson's life should then have had the ability to deny her adequate security," Francis Molloy, a Sinn Féin Assemblyman, said. "Those who quite deliberately left Rosemary Nelson exposed and vulnerable to attack despite the very obvious threat to her life are as much responsible for her death as those who carried out the actual assassination."

The RUC and the Northern Ireland Office insisted Mrs Nelson had never applied for

protection. Last year others had done so on her behalf but she was not judged to be sufficiently at risk.

Sources described the allegations of collusion as "absolute nonsense" and doubted that Mrs Nelson would have accepted protection.

A senior Metropolitan Police officer recently investigated Mrs Nelson's claims that the RUC had harassed and threatened her but his report has not yet been published.

Sir Ronnie cast doubt on whether the Red Hand Defenders carried out the murder by themselves when he confirmed that the bomb was more sophisticated than anything they had used previously. The speculation was that they may have been helped by disgruntled members of other loyalist paramilitary groups.

The murder has cast a pall over today's St Patrick's Day celebrations in Washington and complicated President Clinton's task as he tries to help to resolve the decommissioning deadlock in private meetings with David Trimble and Gerry Adams.

Speaking in New York, George Mitchell, the former US senator who chaired the Stormont peace talks, intensified the pressure on the men



Paddy McGee, second left, helping to carry his daughter's coffin into her house in Lurgan yesterday. Hundreds called to pay their respects to the family

when he declared: "History will not forgive them if an agreement, once reached, is not implemented. We must be understanding, we must be patient, we must be tolerant, but we must also be insistent as we say to

those leaders: 'You have done much but you must do more,'" he said.

In Washington Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, said that the bombers would not destroy the Good Friday accord.

## Education could not buy a life of peace

ROSEMARY NELSON'S father struggled with his grief as he helped to carry his daughter's coffin into her home yesterday. Friends said that Paddy McGee had worked hard all his life to try to keep his children distant from the Troubles, spending much of the money he earned as a factory worker on their education.

He and his wife, Sheila, were deeply proud of Rosemary's middle-class lifestyle and success as a solicitor. That she was murdered because of her education was difficult to bear.

"It's terrible, really terrible what has happened," Mrs Nelson's brother-in-law said. A cousin, who declined to be named, said the "disgusting" death had left her parents "shattered".

The Roman Catholic residents of Lurgan were in mourning yesterday for the loss of Mrs Nelson, who had championed their rights. Hundreds of people poured into their red-brick house to pay their respects to her husband, Paul, and children, Gavin, 13, Christopher, 11, and Sarah, 8. The boys had returned early from a school skiing trip and went directly to the morgue so that they could accompany their mother's body home.

Mrs Nelson will be buried in Lurgan tomorrow morning after Mass in St Peter's Church. Father Kieran McParlan, her parish priest, said she was a fine friend to everyone. "Why would anyone want to take away the life of a lady who did



Rosemary Nelson: funeral will be held tomorrow

so much good for her family and community?" he asked.

It was a question being repeated on the nationalist Kilwilkie estate as people huddled in small groups trying to cope with the brutality of the car-bomb murder. The run-down estate, littered with IRA graffiti, is less than five minutes from Mrs Nelson's house.

It is home to many of her former clients, including Colin Duffy. She successfully appealed his conviction for the 1993 murder of a UDR soldier and forced police to drop charges against him for the murder of two officers on patrol in Lurgan in 1997. The latter case particularly angered loyalists.

Asked whether he felt responsible for her death, Mr Duffy said: "Many's the time I have spoken to her about the obvious danger she was putting

herself in by taking on high-profile cases. She was not prepared to back off and I did not get any sense of fear from her. She knew there were risks but I suppose, like any human being, she felt that it was not going to come to her door."

Mr Duffy said that no other solicitor would be brave enough to take on republican clients. He, like most republicans, alleges that the security forces colluded in her murder. He said the RUC hated her and attempted to undermine his opinion of her in interrogation.

He also said that police referred repeatedly to her face, scarred since childhood: "They would go on about her being ugly and how could anyone deal with having to look at her."

Sinn Féin has sought to control the anger on the estate since the death by saying that young men should stay indoors at night. Some were, however, preparing petrol bombs yesterday to throw at police patrols. One republican said trouble would start after the funeral.

A silent protest, organised by Sinn Féin, was held last night by residents, who walked from the Kilwilkie estate to Mrs Nelson's office in the town centre. Bouquets lined the door, carrying messages such as "A beautiful woman with a beautiful vision". One mourner left a small tub of shamrock, marking St Patrick's Day, which the rest of Ireland will celebrate today.

Martin Fletcher, page 20

## Paras can keep their surnames secret

By MICHAEL EVANS

AN ORDER for five soldiers to be identified for a new inquiry in the Bloody Sunday shootings was overruled in the High Court yesterday.

The paratroopers had been ordered to give their surnames when appearing before the inquiry panel investigating the 1972 killing of 13 civilians in Londonderry. Yesterday Vice-President Lord Justice Kennedy, sitting with Mr Justice Owen and Mr Justice Blomfield, said the decision was flawed because there was a misunderstanding about the nature of anonymity granted to the soldiers by the original Widgery inquiry in 1972, nor did it take into account an assessment of the threat they faced.

The decision not to grant absolute anonymity was "unlawful and invalid", Lord Justice Kennedy said. It was still up to the inquiry to decide on the basis of the arguments whether the soldiers should have anonymity.

## Claims of RUC threats could end in sackings

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

RUC officers could face criminal charges over allegations that they threatened and harassed Rosemary Nelson.

Ronnie Flanagan, Chief Constable of the RUC, said yesterday that he had sent a Scotland Yard file on the claims to Alasdair Fraser, the Northern Ireland Director of Public Prosecutions.

The Independent Commission for Police Complaints for Northern Ireland, which has overseen the investigations, has also received a report from Scotland Yard and will make a statement later this week. If there are no criminal charges it could consider disciplinary action.

Mrs Nelson had made several public complaints about her treatment by the RUC. She claimed there had been repeated RUC death threats. An RUC officer had spat in her face and another had hit her over the back of the head with a riot shield.

The RUC began investigating the claims in 1997. Last

April she reported that problems were continuing. She said a detective Castlereagh detention centre had made derogatory remarks about her to one of her clients, and she gave evidence to a United Nations group looking at allegations of intimidation of lawyers by RUC officers.

Last July the complaints commission went to Mr Flanagan and to Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, to put forward "serious concerns" about the RUC handling of the case, but refused to give details publicly.

The commission added that it had a statutory and ethical obligation to ensure that all complaints were thoroughly and satisfactorily investigated. When Mr Flanagan proposed to hand the inquiry over to Commander Neil Mulvihill, head of the Yard's organised crime group, the authority insisted on meeting and vetting him.

Mr Mulvihill began work last summer with a small team of officers. The operation was so sensitive that few senior officers in his department knew what he was doing. The report was completed very recently apart from one or two administrative additions which are thought to concern recommendations to the RUC for the future.

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**INSIDE SECTION 2**  
Inner cities look East:  
New housing for  
ethnic communities  
Homes - pages 38-40



مكتبة الأمل



# Number's up for calculator in maths drive

MATHEMATICS should no longer be the preserve of swots, Tony Blair said yesterday as he launched a teaching strategy requiring more use of the brain and less of calculators in primary schools.

The Prime Minister told an audience of teachers and business leaders in London: "For too long maths has been seen by too many people as unfashionable, a subject for swots. We must forge a new status for maths within society as a whole. This means destroying the myth that it's clever to be hopeless at maths."

Carol Vorderman, the television presenter who is supporting the Government's Maths Year 2000 campaign, said: "People who like maths are seen as freaks. Well if so then I'm head girl of the freak school."

The mathematics drive, which involves a daily numeracy hour at all primary schools as part of the £55 million National Numeracy Strategy, follows this year's National Year of Reading and the Government's daily literacy hour.

Yesterday's launch saw the publication of detailed advice for teachers. They were issued with a weighty framework document laying out the teaching of mathematics from reception class to the final year of primary school. The document gives sample questions that indicate the level of attainment required for each age group. Use of calculators is discouraged.

The Government's aim is for 75 per cent of all 11 year

**New initiative will encourage primary school children to learn basics, reports Hannah Betts**

olds to be reaching the mathematics standards expected for their age by 2002. Four out of ten 11 year olds failed to reach the target last year.

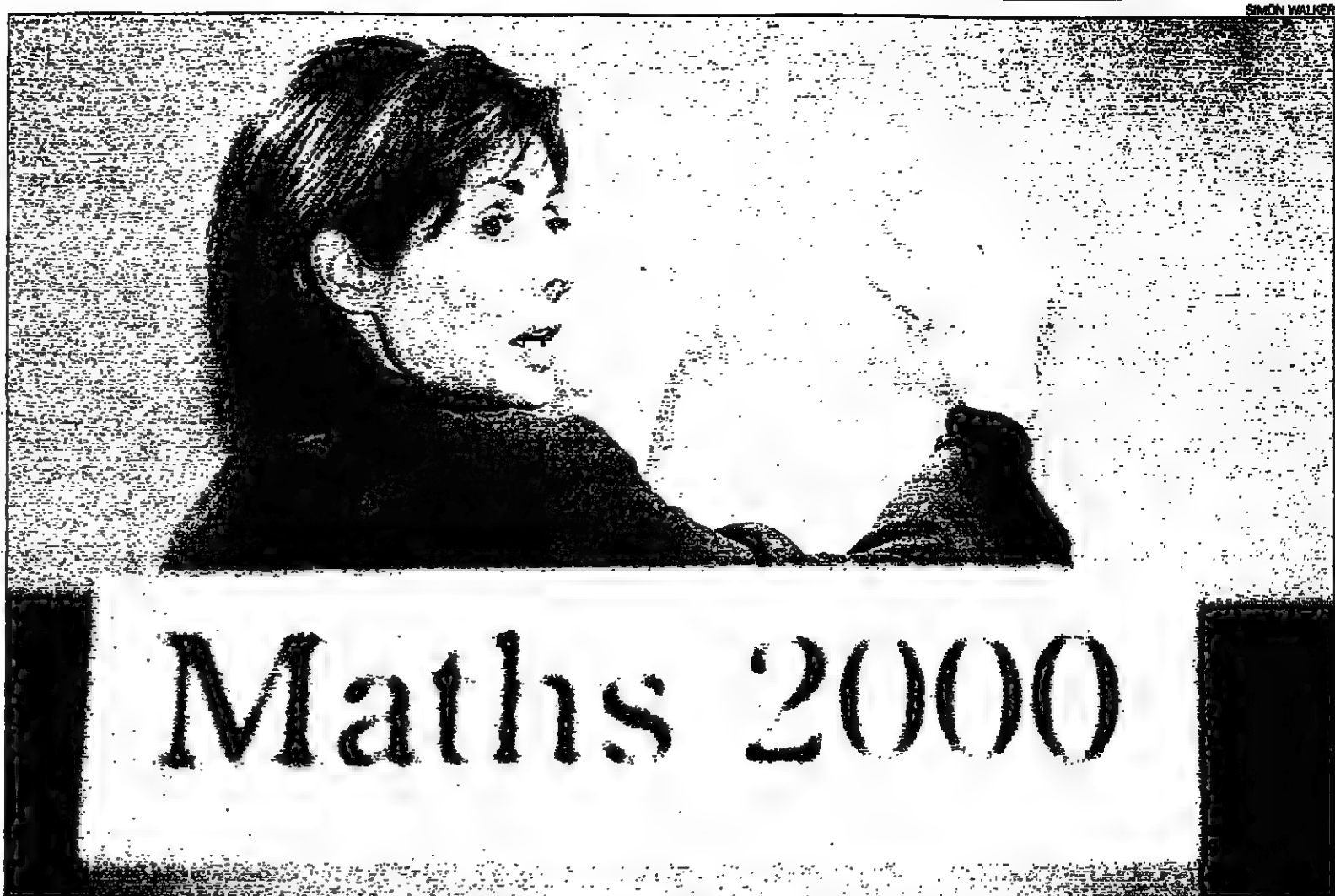
The Government will involve adults to achieve a sea change in the way society feels about mathematics. Three thousand parents will join their children on 500 family numeracy courses and will be encouraged to brush up their times tables.

David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, was the first adult volunteer, arriving fresh from a mathematics test on Radio 4's *Today* programme. He took 14 seconds to answer twelve times nine correctly, but at least managed to avoid the gaffe of his former deputy, Stephen Byers, who suggested that eight times seven was 54 at a mathematics promotion last year.

Teachers' unions reacted cautiously to the numeracy drive. Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of School Masters and Union of Women Teachers, said: "Many teachers will

appreciate the rich irony in the Government's employing Carol Vorderman to launch Maths Year 2000. She earns more for one day's TV work than many teachers earn in a whole year and unlike Carol, teachers can't have their mistakes edited out."

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said that while the National Numeracy Strategy would not be as controversial as the Literacy Strategy, some concerns would remain. "It is tied too closely to the Government's artificial national targets, and its introduction, along with the Literacy Strategy, threatens to marginalise the rest of the National Curriculum. The NAHT has no objection to Maths Year 2000 but quite frankly every year is a maths year in all schools."



Doing it by fingers: Carol Vorderman helping to launch Maths 2000 yesterday. She said she was head girl of the freak school of those who liked maths

## Actress wins by recounting her lines

By SUSIE STEINER

A SOAP star trounced politicians and a professor yesterday in three multiplication teasers set by *The Times*. Barbara Windsor, of *EastEnders* and the *Carry On* films, gave the fastest answers and said: "Well, you don't want to look like a berk, do you?"

We asked three questions that have teased government ministers: seven times eight (56), which famously tripped up Stephen Byers when he was Schools Minister; nine times eight (72), asked of David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, a year ago; and 12 times nine, (108), which took Mr Blunkett 14 seconds on the *Today* programme yesterday.

Heinz Wolff, celebrity inventor and Emeritus Professor of Bioengineering at Brunel University, answered the first two questions in two seconds each, and the third in three seconds. He said: "I like playing with numbers. If I'm at a wedding and on the board is hymn number 192, then I think. That's twice 96! Ms Windsor answered the three questions

accurately in under two seconds each.

"It's my era," she explained. "I'm 61 and we had to learn our tables by heart. I don't have any problem with maths. I've got a ridiculous memory and I did enjoy maths. My mother would be really really proud."

David Willetts, the Shadow Education Secretary who is known as "Two Brain Willetts" among some parliamentarians, answered the first question in four seconds, the second in three seconds and the third in four seconds.

He said: "We used to recite them by rote. My worry about what the Government is doing is simply that their strategy is indiscriminate and compulsory."

Peter Stringfellow, 58, the nightclub owner, took 20 seconds on the first question, eight seconds on the next and 15 seconds on the last with a couple of incorrect attempts. He said: "I never learnt my times tables because I was ill for that period at school."



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**Six-year-olds**

1. What is one more than 6? Then 9? Then 19? Then 24?  
What is one less than 8? Then 20? Then 25?

(Answers) 7, 10, 20, 23, 7, 19, 24, 17, 19, 24

2. Fill in the missing numbers on this number track

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15

3. How many different ways can you score 4 by rolling two dice?  
What about 6?

**Nine-year-olds**

1. What are the next three numbers in each sequence?  
a. 38, 47, 56, 65  
b. 48, 41, 34, 27  
c. 135, 137, 139, 141  
d. 288, 286, 284  
e. 74, 83, 92  
f. 143, 145, 147, 149, 151  
g. 26, 35, 44, 53, 62, 71, 80, 89, 98, 107, 116, 125, 134, 143, 152, 161, 170, 179, 188, 197, 206, 215, 224, 233, 242, 251, 260, 269, 278, 287, 296, 305, 314, 323, 332, 341, 350, 359, 368, 377, 386, 395, 404, 413, 422, 431, 440, 449, 458, 467, 476, 485, 494, 503, 512, 521, 530, 539, 548, 557, 566, 575, 584, 593, 602, 611, 620, 629, 638, 647, 656, 665, 674, 683, 692, 701, 710, 719, 728, 737, 746, 755, 764, 773, 782, 791, 800, 809, 818, 827, 836, 845, 854, 863, 872, 881, 890, 899, 908, 917, 926, 935, 944, 953, 962, 971, 980, 989, 998, 1007, 1016, 1025, 1034, 1043, 1052, 1061, 1070, 1079, 1088, 1097, 1106, 1115, 1124, 1133, 1142, 1151, 1160, 1169, 1178, 1187, 1196, 1205, 1214, 1223, 1232, 1241, 1250, 1259, 1268, 1277, 1286, 1295, 1304, 1313, 1322, 1331, 1340, 1349, 1358, 1367, 1376, 1385, 1394, 1403, 1412, 1421, 1430, 1439, 1448, 1457, 1466, 1475, 1484, 1493, 1502, 1511, 1520, 1529, 1538, 1547, 1556, 1565, 1574, 1583, 1592, 1601, 1610, 1619, 1628, 1637, 1646, 1655, 1664, 1673, 1682, 1691, 1700, 1709, 1718, 1727, 1736, 1745, 1754, 1763, 1772, 1781, 1790, 1800, 1809, 1818, 1827, 1836, 1845, 1854, 1863, 1872, 1881, 1890, 1900, 1909, 1918, 1927, 1936, 1945, 1954, 1963, 1972, 1981, 1990, 2000

2. Fill in the missing numbers in this sequence:  
45, 49, 53, 57, 61, 65, 69, 73, 77, 81, 85, 89, 93, 97, 101, 105, 109, 113, 117, 121, 125, 129, 133, 137, 141, 145, 149, 153, 157, 161, 165, 169, 173, 177, 181, 185, 189, 193, 197, 201, 205, 209, 213, 217, 221, 225, 229, 233, 237, 241, 245, 249, 253, 257, 261, 265, 269, 273, 277, 281, 285, 289, 293, 297, 301, 305, 309, 313, 317, 321, 325, 329, 333, 337, 341, 345, 349, 353, 357, 361, 365, 369, 373, 377, 381, 385, 389, 393, 397, 401, 405, 409, 413, 417, 421, 425, 429, 433, 437, 441, 445, 449, 453, 457, 461, 465, 469, 473, 477, 481, 485, 489, 493, 497, 501, 505, 509, 513, 517, 521, 525, 529, 533, 537, 541, 545, 549, 553, 557, 561, 565, 569, 573, 577, 581, 585, 589, 593, 597, 601, 605, 609, 613, 617, 621, 625, 629, 633, 637, 641, 645, 649, 653, 657, 661, 665, 669, 673, 677, 681, 685, 689, 693, 697, 701, 705, 709, 713, 717, 721, 725, 729, 733, 737, 741, 745, 749, 753, 757, 761, 765, 769, 773, 777, 781, 785, 789, 793, 797, 801, 805, 809, 813, 817, 821, 825, 829, 833, 837, 841, 845, 849, 853, 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# IOC members 'out to get' Samaranch

THE Olympics chief, Juan Antonio Samaranch, has admitted to close associates that there is a campaign among leading members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to force his resignation over the cash-for-votes corruption scandal.

On the eve of what promises to be the most turbulent day in the Olympic movement since Ben Johnson was found positive for drugs at the 1988 Olympics, 91 IOC members were gathered for a meeting in Lausanne.

A vote is due today on whether Señor Samaranch should remain as president and whether to expel the six members who received favours from Salt Lake City in its successful bid to stage the 2002 Winter Games.

Four members of the committee have already resigned. Sources said yesterday that Señor Samaranch, who has held his post since 1980 but has refused responsibility for the biggest crisis in the organisation's 106-year history, is considering several options.

One is that he should stay on until his planned retirement in 2001. Another is to retire after the Sydney Olympics in September 2000. A third is to give up when the IOC meets in Seoul, South Korea, in June. The fourth, which is consid-

**Olympic leaders  
are braced for  
turmoil, writes  
John Goodbody  
in Lausanne**

ered the least likely, is to resign immediately.

Several leading members are aware that large segments of the international community and some sponsors believe that Señor Samaranch should take personal responsibility and resign. Such an action, they believe, would show the world that a new era in the Olympics is beginning.

However, several of his possible successors fear that if they try to persuade Señor Samaranch to resign within the next few months, they risk losing the support of other members.

Kevin Gosper, an Australian member of the executive, said yesterday that no decision had yet been taken on how the vote on Señor Samaranch's future would be taken. It may be by secret ballot or by show of hands. Señor Samaranch's supporters would prefer that because members would be more reluctant publicly to op-

pose him. Each of the six members facing expulsion will today be allowed 20 minutes to defend himself before his fellow members.

A two-thirds majority is required for expulsion. The six are: Seutil Paul Wallwork of Samoa; Lamine Keita of Mali; Agustín Arroyo of Ecuador; Zein el-Abdin Ahmed Abdel Gadir of Sudan; Sergio Santander Pantini of Chile; and Jean-Claude Ganga of Congo.

Mr Ganga yesterday launched a bitter criticism of the move to expel him, accusing the six-man investigating panel and the executive board of seeking revenge for the occasion in 1976 when he led the black African boycott of the Montreal Olympics.

Mr Ganga said that there was an attempt to "stop Africa having an influence in the IOC. They are trying to stop us being at the centre of decision-making in world sport."

□ Sydney: Phil Coles, an Australian member of the IOC, denied accusations of free-loading and gift-taking that threaten his career. Amid growing moves to drop him from the Sydney committee preparing for the 2000 Games, he said allegations that he took £24,600 in travel and accommodation from Salt Lake City were a myth. (AFP)



Troops of the 1st Battalion King's Own Border Regiment patrolling Skopje airport yesterday as part of the Nato force in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia poised to rescue peace monitors in Kosovo if necessary

SERBIAN officials told mediators at the Kosovo peace talks yesterday that Belgrade would rather fight Nato than sign up to an autonomy deal for the province which they said had been finalised behind their backs (Tom Walk-

## Serbs 'would rather fight'

er writes). But sources close to the mediators said the posturing belied a nervousness among the Serbs, whom one diplomat said had been "bad-

ly rattled" by the sudden Albanian agreement to the Contact Group's three-year transition blueprint. Wolfgang Petritsch, the EU mediator, told

the Serbs that Nato bombing was "days, not weeks, away". □ Sarajevo: Jozo Lenjar, the Croat Deputy Interior Minister of Bosnia's Muslim-Croat federation, was critically ill yesterday after a car bomb attack here. (Reuters)

## Jordan to purchase British tanks

By MICHAEL EVANS  
DEFENCE EDITOR

THE Royal Jordanian Army is to buy a "substantial" number of British Challenger tanks, it was announced yesterday.

Britain's main battle tanks, which were deployed in the Gulf War, are now being replaced by a more advanced Challenger 2, which first came into service in June last year. Although the British and Jordanian governments are still discussing the matter, the sale could involve hundreds of tanks.

The British Army has about 400 Challenger 1s, all of which will be surplus once the full order for Challenger 2s has been completed.

Paul Beaver of Jane's Defence Weekly said the Challenger 1s would replace the Jordanian Tariq tank, which is based on the Centurion, and would supplement the Khalid tank, which he said has "high levels of commonality with the Challenger". Mr Beaver said he understood that concerns over classified systems, including the Chobham armour fitted to Challengers, had been resolved.

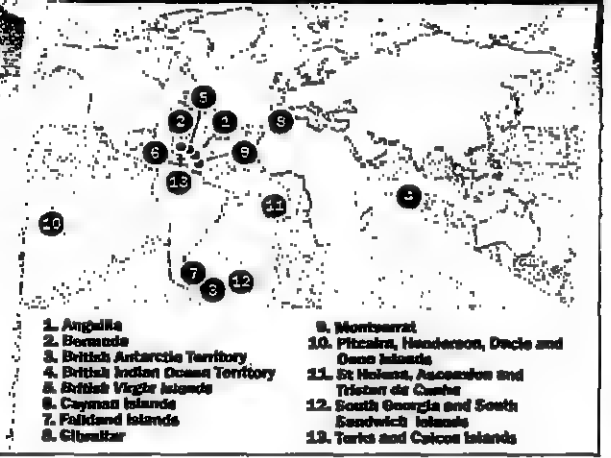
Lord Gilbert, the Defence Procurement Minister, said during a visit to Amman yesterday that the exact number of tanks to be sold and the delivery dates had yet to be agreed.

The deal is the first arms agreement between Britain and Jordan since King Hussein died. Although the Challengers are relatively old, they will significantly strengthen Jordan's defence forces.

□ Tabat: King Abdullah of Jordan, making his first official visit to an Arab country since coming to the throne, held talks in Tabat with President Mubarak of Egypt.

The two leaders attended the inauguration of a link between their countries' electricity supply systems through a submarine cable between Tabat and Jordan's southern city of Aqaba — the first step on the way to a broader Arab electricity grid. "This is the first practical step to link economies ties after King Hussein's death," an Egyptian official said. (Reuters)

## LAST OUTPOSTS OF AN EMPIRE



## Cook opens door to 150,000 new citizens

By MICHAEL BINYON  
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

AFTER a long delay, Robin Cook is to tell Parliament today that Britain is to restore full British citizenship to all 150,000 inhabitants of its 13 dependent territories as soon as possible. A Bill will be introduced in the next Parliament and those involved are expected to be given full British passports within a year.

Labour sees the Foreign Secretary's move as an overdue recognition of the hardship caused by the Conservative Government's 1981 Immigration Act,

which deprived all those living in Britain's remaining colonies of an automatic right to British citizenship. The result was to bar them from working or settling in Britain, to restrict their travel and confine them to tiny islands plagued by high unemployment.

About 150,000 people in all will be eligible for new passports: inhabitants of Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands are already full citizens. The change will allow everyone living in the dependencies scattered between Bermuda and the Pitcairn Islands to travel to the European Union without visas. It will also give them full Westminster voting

rights if they move to Britain, though not in their own islands.

The Bill was supposed to be ready six months ago; however, it ran into the bureaucracy of the Home Office, which insisted on making a thorough investigation. Home Office officials were afraid of setting unwelcome immigration precedents.

The Government does not expect any mass immigration to Britain, especially as living standards in Bermuda, the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands are higher than in Britain. These territories account for almost half the population of those eligible for

new passports. Labour made clear at a summit of all the former colonies last year that it regarded the present situation as unjust. The 1981 Act was passed to stop the six million inhabitants of Hong Kong moving to Britain before the handover to China. It hurt the remote and poorer territories, especially St Helena, one of the most isolated, which has high unemployment and depends on a yearly £3.2 million subsidy from Britain.

For three territories, citizenship is irrelevant: British Antarctic Territory, South Georgia and British Indian Ocean Territory are uninhabited.

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**BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER  
IN JERUSALEM**

The city's legal status remained as a divisive issue last week when Israel demanded, but failed to secure, a pledge from European Union diplomats that they would not meet Palestinian diplomats in the eastern sector of the city, captured by Israel in 1967 but claimed by the Palestinians as the capital of their future state.

Along with the future of Israeli troops in Lebanon, the future of Jerusalem has suddenly emerged as a key issue in Israeli election on May 17, with the right-wing Govern-



In the last poll, in 1996, Mr Netanyahu and his Likud party made much of claims that Shimon Peres, then Labour Party leader, would have permitted the city again to be divided into Arab and Jewish halves. Ehud Barak, his successor and former chief of staff, has shown determina-

The European Union in the letter which sparked the latest controversy said that Jerusalem was a separate entity. The Israeli Government hit back by releasing a hardline statement vowing never to agree to the division or internationalisation of the city which it claims to have been its capital for 3,000 years.

**By Christopher Walker**

Many Palestinian speakers at the conference complained of an Israeli roadblock that delays passage between Jerusalem and Bethlehem by up to two hours for each tourist coach. Moshe Katsav, the Israeli Tourism Minister, said that the checkpoint was necessary to ensure security.

A high-contrast, black and white photograph showing a person lying on a stretcher or gurney, being attended to by another person. The scene is outdoors, possibly on a beach or near a body of water, with a textured, light-colored background.

**Members of the al-Azameh tribe have trekked across the border with camels, donkeys and provisions. Conflicting**

reports have said that the exodus was because of the severe drought in the region or to escape a blood feud. Troops who were ready to remove the tribe were stopped by the Supreme Court ruling, a Negev regional council spokeswoman said. (AP)

**FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WASHINGTON**

James Rubin, the State Department spokesman, denied that US funds were be-

Mr Helms said the issue emerged after USAID funded a programme by the local Planned Parenthood group "that utilised traditional Haitian health practitioners for distributing information on family planning" and sought to use voodoo ceremonies as an "important social network".

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# Congo rebels kill Mugabe troops

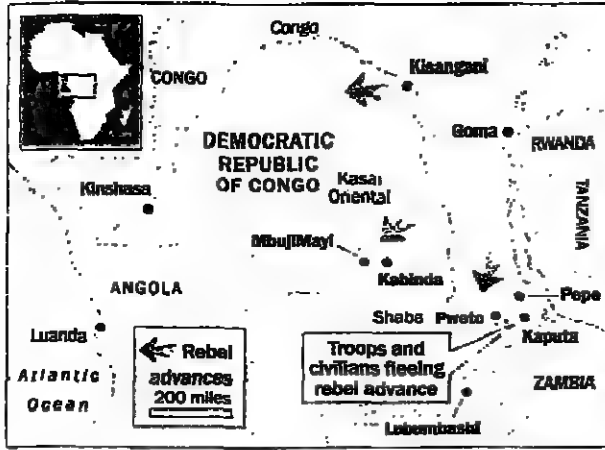
FROM ROBIN LODGE  
IN NAIROBI

UP TO 150 Zimbabwean soldiers are reported to have been killed in battles with rebel forces in the southeast of the Democratic Republic of Congo, while thousands of refugees have been streaming across the border with Zambia to escape the fighting.

A military expert on the region, citing rebel sources, said yesterday that at least 80 Zimbabweans had been killed in the clashes — identified by documents found on the bodies — but that there could be more bodies hidden in the bush.

A rebel commander said that 150 had been killed, including a battalion commander, while four armoured vehicles and several military lorries had been captured. He said four Zimbabweans had been taken prisoner.

The fighting comes after a Zimbabwean-led attack on rebel forces last week aimed at halting a rebel advance on the diamond town of MbujiMayi.



The Zimbabwean media reported that more than 230 Ugandan soldiers had been killed in fighting with forces supporting President Kabila near MbujiMayi, 50 miles west of Kabinda.

The reports, which have not had independent confirmation, also said the losses had included a battalion commander. The latest claims have also proved impossible to verify,

with no independent observers to witness the fighting, which the rebels said took place over the past few days.

## LINKS

<http://www.drcngo.org/fr/maas/index.html> — Congo website  
<http://www.casualties.com/WHC.html> — New Congo Net  
<http://www.sandoo-aaa.net/> — Southern African Development Committee

near the towns of Peta, Pweto and Kabinda in Shaba province. Last week, a rebel spokesman said their forces had killed 300 troops loyal to President Kabila.

The Times of Zambia reported on Monday that at least 10,000 civilians, including a number of French settlers, had crossed the border. Yesterday a spokesman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said people were passing through one crossing point at Kalanda at a rate of 900 an hour. Those fleeing were also said to include 800 Congo Government soldiers.

□ Harare: A Zimbabwe defence headquarters spokesman, Colonel Chancellor Diye, dismissed last night as propaganda claims of the first serious reverse since President Mugabe sent 8,000 troops to the Democratic Republic of Congo last August (Michael Hartnack writes). "That is a lie," the colonel responded when asked about reports from both Nairobi and Kigali of a pitched battle on Monday.



President Clinton and his wife host a millennium event yesterday at the White House dedicated to "Women as Citizens". In a New York poll, 10 per cent of voters wanted to know "why Hillary still stays with the President"

## Mayor dashes Hillary's Senate hopes

HILLARY CLINTON may be having second thoughts about trying for elected office after the latest opinion poll indicated that she would be easily defeated by Rudolph Giuliani, the New York Mayor, in a possible race for the US Senate.

The survey, by Zogby International pollsters, put Mr Giuliani "comfortably" ahead of Mrs Clinton with 48.4 per cent to 36.9 per cent of the vote, indicating that winning the New York Senate seat would be an uphill struggle that could easily end in humiliation for the President's wife.

"There was a kind of honeymoon after she announced she was thinking of running, but now it is clear what a major battle she would face if she runs against Giuliani. The honeymoon is clearly over," John Zogby said.

Democratic voters in New York still favour Mrs Clinton as a Senate candidate, but New Yorkers in general hold a more favourable view of their Republican Mayor. The poll indicated that voters were particularly uncertain why Mrs Clinton would want to run for the seat and what she intends to do for New York State should she win it. The scandals of recent months and the state of the Clintons' marriage have also had an effect on her possible candidature because nearly 10 per cent of voters "wanted to know why she still stays with the President".

Neither Mrs Clinton nor Mr Giuliani have formally announced they will run for the Senate seat to be vacated by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, but in the aftermath of her husband's impeachment trial Mrs Clinton made clear that she was considering a bid, prompting a frenzy of excitement in Democratic circles and some sharply critical remarks from Mr Giuliani.

Mrs Clinton's backers insisted that she would be impossible to beat if she decided to run in the race and an initial poll by Time/CNN indicated that she was supported by 52 per cent to Mr Giuliani's 43 per cent. But as sympathy for her ordeal as a wronged wife has faded, so has her popularity.

The Senate job is only one of several options being considered by Mrs Clinton after her husband leaves office, ranging from founding a public policy unit to serving in the Cabinet of a possible future Democratic Administration. Mrs Clinton is also weighing whether to head a charity foundation or take up an academic post.

"Most of the universities in the country would give anything to have her come and

Poll shows New Yorkers favour Giuliani, reports Ben Macintyre in Washington

teach." Donna Shabala, the Health and Human Services Secretary and a friend of Mrs Clinton, said.

Financial considerations may play a part in her final decision because the Clintons have little in the way of savings, no home of their own and vast legal bills, although a defence fund is working to raise cash to pay the bills. As a writer and lecturer she could earn millions of dollars in the aftermath of the Clinton presidency, but as a senator Mrs Clinton would be barred from sitting on corporate boards or delivering paid speeches.

Mr Clinton has observed that his wife would make a "terrific" senator, but with one eye, perhaps, on the family's bank statement, he has also remarked that she could earn "\$20 million" (£12 million) after he leaves office.

As a senator Mrs Clinton would earn \$136,000 a year, but it has been estimated that she would earn about \$50,000 a lecture, and at least \$5 million alone from a tell-all book about her time in the White House.

"The more she reveals, the more valuable the project would be," Judith Regan, a New York literary agent, said. □ Hat in the ring: Steve Forbes, the publisher, promising a "new information age campaign", yesterday became the first person to announce his presidential candidature on the Internet. (Reuters)



Giuliani: "comfortably" ahead of Mrs Clinton


## Clinton offers new debt plan for Africa

Washington: President Clinton called on countries yesterday to pursue a broad approach to debt relief and write off \$70 billion (£43 billion), mostly in Africa.


Calling for a partnership with Africa, Mr Clinton announced the initiative in a speech to the opening session of a US-Africa ministerial meeting at the State Department. His proposal extended

the US commitment to providing more relief to a broader range of heavily indebted poor countries more quickly and with strong reform programmes. "What I am proposing is debt reduction that is deeper and faster," he told ministers from 46 African countries.

He proposed "complete forgiveness" of bilateral concessional loans. (Reuters)



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Firefighters survey the wreck after a train bound for New Orleans hit a lorry on a level crossing

# At least 13 die as US train hits lorry

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

AT least 13 people were killed, with others missing, and more than 100 were injured yesterday after a passenger train ploughed into a lorry at a level crossing at Bourbonnais, south of Chicago.

Rescuers spent yesterday sifting through the wreckage of the Amtrak train looking for survivors. There had been 217 people on board, including the crew, when the overnight train

from Chicago to New Orleans hit the lorry on a crossing on Monday night.

The driver of the lorry, which was carrying steel from a local plant, was believed to have survived. Most of the train was derailed and fires broke out in several carriages. Some of those taken to hospital were in a critical condition.

As rescuers searched the train the word "empty" was

sprayed on carriages when it was clear that there were no survivors inside. But more than ten people were unaccounted for and firemen expressed little hope of finding anyone else alive. Their search was concentrated on a twisted sleeper carriage which was expected to contain more bodies.

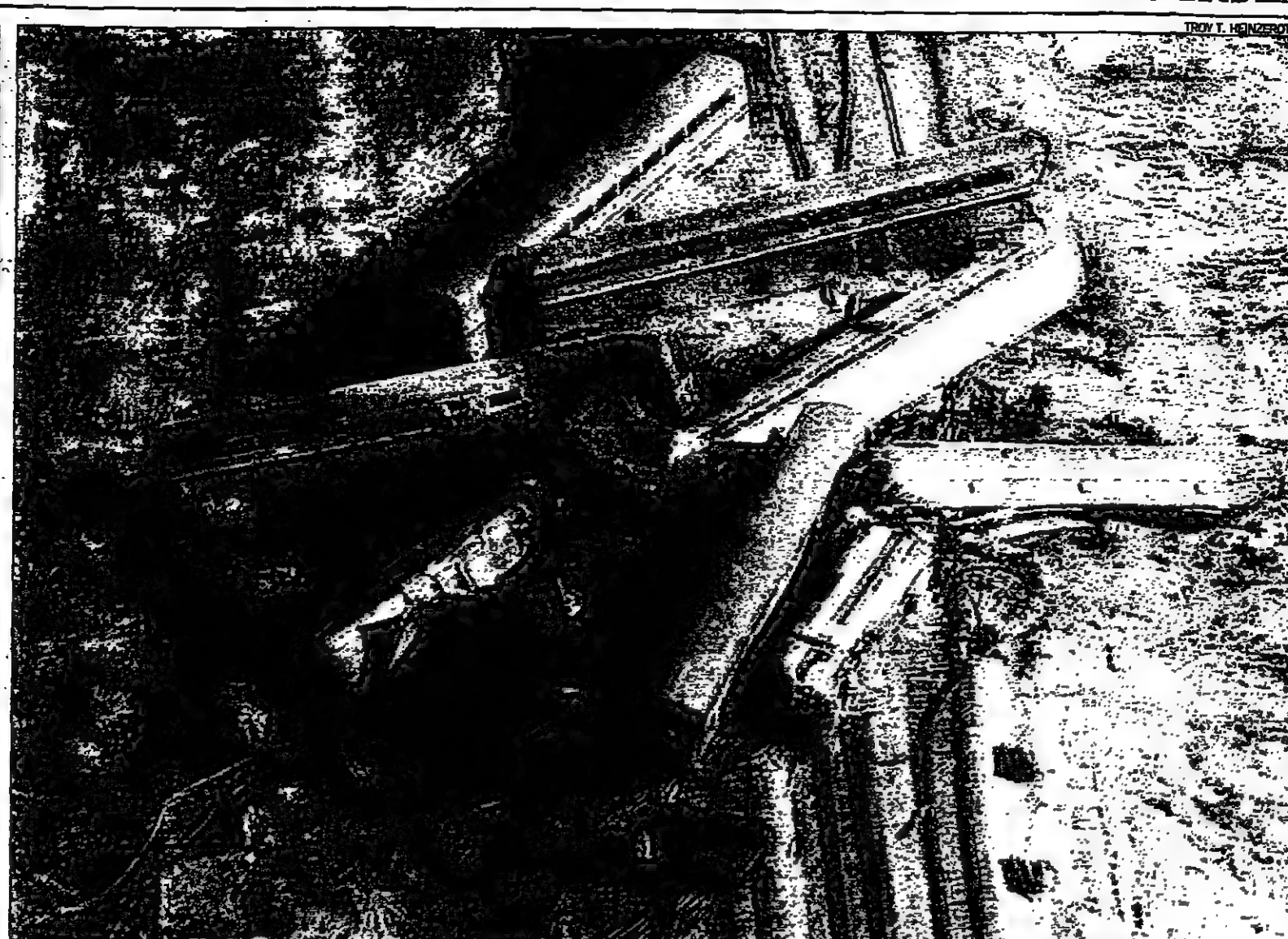
Lee Bullock, president of Amtrak Inter City, told reporters that the cause of the acci-

dent was not known. The crossing was protected by gates. The investigation is expected to centre on whether the gates and lights, which were flashing after the accident, were

working before the collision.

The train consisted of two engines and 14 carriages. Both engines and all but the last three carriages left the tracks. One of the engines split in two.

The gravest accident in Amtrak history happened in 1993 when 47 people were killed near Mobile, Alabama, when a tug hit a bridge and caused it to collapse as a train was passing over it. In another serious accident, 11 people were killed and 26 injured in February 1996 when an Amtrak train smashed head-on into a commuter train in Silver Spring, just outside Washington.



The scene of devastation after the rail crash at Bourbonnais, Illinois, south of Chicago, yesterday. Two engines and 11 carriages left the tracks



## WORLD SUMMARY

### Pilgrims defy UN air ban

Riyadh: An Iraqi plane carrying 110 Muslim pilgrims ignored a UN embargo and the Western-imposed no-fly zone and landed in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The Iraqi Airways head said Iraq was planning three flights to the haj pilgrimage this year. (Reuters)

### Anwar's plea

Kuala Lumpur: Anwar Ibrahim, Malaysia's sacked Finance Minister, asked the judge in his corruption trial to step down, saying he has not had a fair hearing. (Reuters)

### Cuban jailings

Havana: Cuba risked international human rights wrath by jailing four dissidents — one for five years — for stirring up unrest against the Government of Fidel Castro. (AP)

### Soft landing

Moscow: Ludmila Mulin drove off a garage's ninth floor as her ex-husband, Gleb, taught her to drive. Both were hurt as the car went through a glass wall to land in trees. (AP)

### Ex-mayor held

New York: Former Mayor David Dinkins and two congressmen were among 14 people arrested as they protested at last month's fatal police shooting of an unarmed immigrant. (AP)

### Diplomat hurt

Budapest: Mick Leake, a second secretary at the British Embassy here, is in hospital after being seriously injured in a car accident 60 miles from the Hungarian capital. (AP)

### Top table dish

Tehran: Iran may end its four-year ban on satellite dishes, but only for "elites" such as artists, professors, journalists and public officials. (AFP)

## Paula Jones and husband announce separation

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

IN PUBLIC they have put on a show of commitment to each other, but in private their marriage was plagued by rows and proved unable to survive the accusation that the President of the United States was guilty of sexual harassment. Paula Jones — the woman whose legal action against Bill Clinton triggered the Monica Lewinsky scandal — has separated from her husband.

Mrs Jones has said that she and her husband, Steve, had no immediate plans to divorce but she is moving back to live near her mother in Arkansas while he remains at their condominium in Long Beach, California. She said that they were "not going to get ugly with each other" and were no different from many other couples who live apart because of different career ambitions and interests.

"I wanted to get back closer to my family and friends," Mrs Jones told

USA Today. "In California, I had to be very careful about who I got to know, so I didn't develop any close friendships."

The newspaper said the couple had been discussing a separation for some time after disagreements over the strategy in the sexual harassment case and how to spend the money from the out-of-court settlement with Mr Clinton.

Mrs Jones claimed that in 1991, when she was engaged to Steve and Mr Clinton was Governor of Arkan-

sas, she visited him in a hotel room where he asked her to perform oral sex. The affair with Ms Lewinsky emerged when the former White House trainee was asked to submit an affidavit in Mrs Jones's harassment case.

James Carville, Mr Clinton's former adviser, suggested that Mrs Jones was "trailer park" trash, but in November Mr Clinton eventually settled with an \$850,000 (£524,690) payment that was not accompanied by an apology or admittance of wrong-

doing. After paying her lawyers, Mrs Jones was left with \$201,000. She plans to take a job as a manicurist and is considering offers from the media.

Mr Jones has been unemployed since being dismissed last year as a Northwest Airlines clerk. He is contesting that dismissal and plans to write a book and pursue an acting career. Their sons, six and two, will live with Mrs Jones, who has bought a ranch house in Cabot, Arkansas, near her mother's home.



Jones moved back to live near her mother

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# The thrill of knowing

Where is Mombasa? In European Brain Week John McCrone explains how the brain surprises us into knowing the answer

When we get a joke or a riddle, there is a definite feeling that comes with the moment. A friend might try out a brain-teaser on us, saying that this person went up to bed, turned off the light and slid under the covers. The problem was that the light switch was right across the room, yet he still managed to make it into bed before the room went dark. So how did he do it?

The answer, if you have not guessed, is that it was daylight when he went to bed. But the point is that when we have pondered something for a second and then get the solution, we feel a sudden clap of insight. We do not just see the silly logic of the solution, saying to ourselves in dry computer fashion, "well, yes, that adds up". We feel an emotional jolt, an "aha" of surprise or pleasure.

We feel an emotional jolt, an 'aha' of surprise or pleasure

And a similar sharp stab of emotion occurs in many situations, such as when we find a set of door keys we have been looking for, when we suddenly remember yesterday was our mother's birthday, or when a dog dashes out into the road in front of our car. There is a shock that seems to grab our attention and tell us something significant has happened.

Aha! feelings come in many different flavours and vary in strength. Some lead to a feeling of elation and delight, as when we hear a funny joke or discover we have won a lottery prize; others can lead to a sinking feeling or even distress, as when we note heavy footsteps coming up behind us on a dark night, or spot a hairy spider on our shirt sleeve.

The scale of an aha! can also range from the mildest buzz of interest or familiarity right up to heart-pumping alarm. This variety is confusing, but a big clue about the origins of all such feelings is that they ap-

pear tied to the escalation of an event into consciousness. Virtually by definition, the feeling of significance, certainly, recognition, surprise, or alarm are connected to whatever it is that has just caught our attention rather than some background event of which we will not take any further notice.

The feeling seems bound in with an assessment process that leads us eventually to focus on one sensation or thought out of the many that may be swirling on the edges of our minds.

To see how vital a part the aha! feeling plays in our mental lives, just try to imagine consciousness without this constant feeling of judgment. It tells us what is important. It even tells us what is familiar and what is novel, or right or wrong. If asked whether Mombasa was in Africa or South Africa, we might find either answer equally plausible unless we had a positive flicker of recognition to tip in the right direction.

And the way we know that we don't know an answer is when there is no click of familiarity for either alternative — such as, perhaps, if we were asked whether Mombasa was in Uganda or Kenya, or whether its population was half a million or three million. There is a whole cascade of motor and metabolic adjustments that take place whenever we are struck by a surprising event.

The first thing that happens is almost too obvious to mention: we immediately stop whatever it is that we are doing and glance to bring the event into focus. Yet it is worth noting the implications. The decision to halt and inspect must be made before the event itself has entered full consciousness.

The perhaps tricky disengagement from whatever it was that we had been about to do, and the reorientation of



Rapid change: there is a whole cascade of motor and metabolic adjustments whenever we are struck by a surprising event

our senses to a new location, must be organised at a reflexive, pre-conscious, level.

This orientation response is a complete, whole body reaction. When we hear a knock at the door or feel an unexpected

touch on our shoulder, not only do we automatically stop and turn, we also begin to sweat a little, our mouths go dry, our heart rate and blood pressure increase, extra sugar is released into our circula-

tion, our blood vessels dilate to raise the supply to the muscles and brain, our breathing deepens, and our air passages widen to bring in more oxygen. Our brains go through a process of arousal as well. There is a rapid change in neurotransmitter levels to make us more alert. The orientation response makes sure that we hit the ground running, both physically and mentally.

The link between orientation response and the aha! feeling is easy enough to see. As part of orientating to a significant event, or even a significant idea or thought, we experience a rich variety of physical changes.

Our heart may lurch, our stomach heave, our face blanch. There is nothing unreal about such reactions; they

can be measured with voltmeters and blood-pressure gauges. And we will experience them just as directly. So the feeling of knowing that we know — of familiarity and recognition — is a muted version of this orientation reaction. When we ask ourselves if Mombasa is in Kenya, the reason we trust the answer is because of a confirming twinge. It is the only pairing that triggers a slight halting — a catch in this orientation reaction. When we ask ourselves if Mombasa is in Kenya, the reason we trust the answer is because of a confirming twinge. It is the only pairing that triggers a slight halting — a catch in this orientation reaction. When we ask ourselves if Mombasa is in Kenya, the reason we trust the answer is because of a confirming twinge. It is the only pairing that triggers a slight halting — a catch in this orientation reaction.

Extracted from *Going Inside* by John McCrone published by Faber (RRP £20). Times readers can order this title only for £17 by calling the Times Bookshop on 0990 329 454.

## Clash over Big Bang

PARTICLE physicists spend a lot of taxpayers' money, so they need to prove that the public is getting value for it. But a claim issued recently by Fermilab, the US particle physics laboratory at Batavia, Illinois, has provoked cries of "foul" from Europe's equivalent, the CERN laboratory in Geneva.



SCIENCE BRIEFING  
Nigel Hawkes

While the physicists are usually prepared to make common cause in the interests of extracting taxpayers' cash, there are rules to be observed. Among these is not claiming as theirs — at least not too obviously — what somebody else has already discovered.

The row centres on an arcane but vital aspect of how nature behaves. At the Big Bang, equal amounts of matter and antimatter were created, but the Universe as we live in it today consists exclusively of matter. Andrei Sakharov suggested that a subtle difference between particles and antiparticles led, soon after the Big Bang, to a slight excess of particles from which the whole visible Universe has since evolved.

This difference is measurable as a property called charge-parity violation — which amounts to saying that particles and antiparticles do not behave as each other's exact opposites. Providing conclusive evidence of CP violation is therefore important.

Indirect evidence of CP violation in particles called K-mesons (or kaons) was discovered in 1964 by James Cronin and Val Fitch at Brookhaven National Laboratory, Long Island. They won a Nobel prize for their work. Ever

since, physicists have been looking for direct evidence as this would help them to distinguish between rival theories of matter.

Earlier this month Fermilab issued a press release announcing that this long-sought evidence was finally at hand.

There was "an audible gasp", it was said, when the result was announced by Peter Shawhan of the University of Chicago to a seminar on February 24.

What provoked the gasp was Shawhan giving a measure of the degree of CP-violation by saying: "Our result is that epsilon prime over epsilon equals 28, plus or minus 4.1, times ten to the minus four."

Professor Fitch, now at Princeton, says: "It is a most astonishing result. It is quite unexpected and very interesting." It was at this moment that physicists at CERN felt that the unwritten rules had been breached. For an experiment there, first reported 11 years ago, had produced a similar value: 23, plus or minus 6.5, times ten to the minus four. CERN issued a statement offering congratulations for the Fermilab data "which confirm with greater precision the earlier result by the NA31 experiment at CERN".

As Konrad Kleinknecht of the University of Mainz told PhysicsWeb, it was "a brilliant confirmation of the earlier observations at CERN, and deserves credit for that". The irony is that Fermilab has long claimed a much smaller value and was now claiming originality by proving themselves wrong and somebody else right. Naughtily, naughtily.

## An insect turn-off



GRASSHOPPERS like lettuce but cannot abide spinach. Like all insects, grasshoppers require a supply of sterols in their diets, which they convert into cholesterol, an essential part of cell membranes. But not all sterols are equal, and the ones in spinach are useless to the grasshopper.

But how does it know? Spencer Behmer and colleagues from the University of Arizona found out by experiment. They fed grasshoppers on spinach and found that it was nothing to do with taste. Naive grasshoppers tucked in enthusiastically, but when offered a second meal of it, they turned their noses up.

The team found, however, that if the grasshoppers were injected with lettuce sterols immediately after the first meal, they went on eating the spinach. But if they were injected with extra spinach sterols, their aversion to the vegetable increased. So it seems, they conclude in the *Journal of Experimental Biology*, that feedback from the stomach soon after a meal is what turns a grasshopper off spinach. Much like a lager lout and a bad curry.

## El Niño's good turn



EL NIÑO, the climatic variation that begins with a warm current off the coast of Peru and turns into a blizzard of headlines about flood, drought and pestilence, has at last done a good turn. A threatened population of fish eagles at Lake Naivasha in Kenya has El Niño to thank for a fresh chance to flourish.

Dr David Harper and Munir Virani of Leicester University told the Earthwatch Convention Day in Oxford last Saturday that the fish eagles at the lake had been in decline. Over the past 15 years numbers had fallen by 50 per cent, and by 1996-97 they had stopped breeding.

This had been blamed on pesticides, but the Leicester scientists found that it was lack of food: the birds were getting barely enough to survive. Then along came El Niño and the heaviest rains in Kenyan history. The lake level rose by three metres, flooding huge areas and providing lots of food for fish and, indirectly, for fish eagles. They began to breed again. The bounty should last a couple of seasons, ensuring the birds' survival for up to ten years.

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## THE TIMES

SCIENTISTS FOR THE NEW CENTURY

On Wednesday March 31, in *From Captain Hook to Robocop*, Dr Peter Kyberd, from Oxford Orthopaedic Engineering Centre, will discuss how close scientists have come to creating the perfect artificial hand. Are man-machine hybrids like Robocop near to reality, or are they destined to remain in the realms of fiction?

The talk will be introduced by Professor Susan Greenfield, the director of The Royal Institution. There will be the opportunity for questions from the audience.

The lecture will be held at 7.30pm at The Royal Institution of Great Britain, 21 Albemarle Street, London W1X 4BS.

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• I'm not over it yet

**Issued by the NEWSPRINT & NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION GROUP**

The giant-sized man has clearly left an enormous gap in her life, an abyss that she has tried to avoid by creating a daily structure that begins with a 6.45am run around Kensington Gardens, and continues with a schedule as packed as that of any corporate executive.



# They grip their guns more tightly

A murder has hardened IRA attitudes, says Martin Fletcher

Crossmaglen in South Armagh must be the only town in the United Kingdom that has erected a memorial in its square not to the dead of the two World Wars, but to the dead of the IRA. "Glory to you all, praised and humble heroes, who have willingly suffered for your unselfish and passionate love of Irish freedom," reads the inscription beneath a statue of a youth astride an eagle.

Dozens of soldiers and police have been killed in and around the town during the past 30 years. Crossmaglen is the heartland of militant republicanism and, even before loyalists murdered Rosemary Nelson, the human rights lawyer, on Monday, there was no support there for IRA disarmament.

I had, by coincidence, spent Monday morning taking the pulse of the town. Everyone told me the same thing. The Unionist demand for IRA disarmament was a "stalling device", a "trick". If the IRA complied, the Unionists would simply demand something else. There was no way that they would let Sinn Féin into government.

The town was awash with black and yellow bunting. As President Clinton discusses the decommissioning deadlock with Gerry Adams and David Trimble in the White House today, the Sinn Féin/Rangers Irish Football team will be playing Ballina in the all-Ireland final. "What's happening in Washington is just a sideshow," said Paddy Short, a Crossmaglen publican who is Clare Short's uncle. The match was what mattered to the townsfolk. They had given up on politics. If Mr Adams tried to deliver IRA disarmament, "the Provos would tell him to mind his own business".

The IRA must start to disarm to prevent the collapse of the Good Friday accord, but if hopes of that happening were slim before Mrs Nelson's murder, they were all but shredded afterwards.

The murder, timed to cause maximum damage to the peace process, tapped into the very heart of republican folklore. It reinforced the republicans' perception of themselves as a community besieged by loyalist paramilitaries, aided by the security forces of an oppressive British State. Sinn Féin, hell-bent on securing the Royal Ulster Constabulary's disarmament, shamelessly exploited the murder.

Indeed John O'Dowd, a local Sinn Féin councillor, marched straight up to me when I arrived at the scene, within an hour of the explosion, and unequivocally declared that the RUC was responsible.

There is no evidence to support the Sinn Féin accusation. But the circumstances of the bombing play to republican grievances, and reinforce their determination to keep the weapons they need to "defend themselves". The manner of Mrs Nelson's death, her unpopularity with the security forces, her role as legal champion of nationalist causes, and revived accusations of collusion between paramilitaries

and police, all incline republicans to suspicion.

The bomb that killed Mrs Nelson was far more advanced than the pipebombs previously used by the Red Hand Defenders, the loyalist terrorists who claimed responsibility for the attack. The RUC, it is alleged, had every reason to want Mrs Nelson out of the way. She had, for example, secured the release of Colin Duffy, a prominent republican charged with murdering two policemen in 1997. She had also filed numerous formal complaints of RUC harassment and intimidation against both herself and her clients. The murder was, for republicans, an eerie replay of the killing of Pat Finucane, another prominent solicitor murdered by loyalists in 1989. It is widely believed — rightly or wrongly — that he was set up by the security forces, and 1,000 lawyers signed a petition last month demanding a judicial inquiry into his death.

Compounding this atmosphere of distrust has been the revival of accusations that state forces and paramilitaries have colluded. A former loyalist, Bobby Pulpo, claimed last week that the security forces gave him more help to target republicans than he could handle.

Sir Ronnie Flanagan, the RUC Chief Constable, moved swiftly to counter Sinn Féin's allegations by announcing an independent investigation of the murder, but the damage was done. The disarmament deadlock is only a symptom of the deeper problem facing the peace process — the lack of trust between republicans and Unionists. Mrs Nelson's murder has greatly exacerbated that problem.

For disarmament to take place republicans have to believe that Unionists genuinely want to reach an accommodation with nationalism, but Mrs Nelson's killing will fuel republican suspicions that Northern Ireland remains a Protestant state for a Protestant people. For Unionists to admit Sinn Féin to government they have to believe republicans are committed to democracy, but they will hardly be encouraged by its leaders' demagoguery.

There will be little to celebrate at today's St Patrick's Day festivities in Washington. Mr Clinton will exercise his legendary powers of persuasion on Mr Adams and Mr Trimble, and the party leaders will fly home for a final fortnight of frantic talks before this Good Friday's government-imposed deadline.

Right now, it is impossible to see how the deadlock can be broken. Making predictions in Northern Ireland is, however, a notoriously foolish occupation. If the peace process has shown anything, it is the Province's extraordinary capacity not only for wrecking its achievements, but also for rebuilding them, the last seen from the brink of the abyss. Yet, on this St Patrick's Day, there are few in the republican heartland, or beyond who are inclined to be hopeful.

comment@the-times.co.uk



JACQUES THE JOKER, THE QUEEN OF SLEZEE AND A HOUSE OF CARDS

## Derail the gravy train

The Commission has taken Europe for a ride, now it must be abolished

So did you laugh or cry yesterday when you heard that the European Commission had resigned? Did you stab your sausage with a shout of joy, or did you gaze mournfully at a limp cornflake? In short, were you smug or sad as the courtiers had a bad attack of nose-bleed on the royal road of history?

It rather depends on what you think happened. What was significant on Monday night was not that the Commission resigned. It was that Edith Cresson and Jacques Santer did not resign, despite being accused of corruption, nepotism and maladministration in a report that they had commissioned to save their skins. Because they refused to resign, the other commissioners knew that they would all be voted out by the European Parliament. Since they would then find it harder to regain their jobs, they thought it best to tipice immediately from the banquet, in the hope that they could more easily tipice back.

Those of us who have long been sceptical of the European Commission and all its doings can be allowed a brief cry of triumph. Those who plagued Brussels with tales of corruption and who protested over its waste, nepotism, inertia and bureaucratic floundering can say a simple hurrah. Sections of the Brussels document make Whitehall's Scott and Macpherson reports read like Enid Blyton: directorate after directorate is depicted in terms more appropriate to the East Side Mob. The section on the Greek-run Tourism Directorate needs an 'X' certificate. These were the people who accused any critic of being "anti-European", a little Englander, an offshore islander. They said we had missed the train, had no European vision, could not see the big picture.

What garbage. Let nobody ever again — ever — attack those who for years questioned the bland assertions of unelected and unaccountable Eurocrats. All was well at Brussels, said the Berlaymont bar-dits, or not too bad, or not as bad as Westminster, or not as bad as the United Nations. For decades they rejected all criticism of the fraudulent use of faux subventions, regional grants and aid contracts, and the edifice of private "consultancies". Go to any Third World aid project and ask which is the least efficient and most corrupt: the answer is always the European Union. See any unnecessary European road or

grain silo or half-built tenement and it is probably the EU's. The snouts were raised from the trough only long enough to cry "Xenophobia".

The British and Scandinavian participants in these shenanigans claim to have been a restraining hand. We must believe it. In contrast, France was still claiming on Monday night that Mme Cresson had done nothing wrong. In these matters, Paris, Madrid, Lisbon and Rome inhabit a separate moral realm. They make good

blown only after the press had taken up the cause of an auditor whom the Commission was persecuting for revealing its frauds. The media rammed his message down the throats of enough MEPs.

The Union's apologists say that this proves the virtue of stronger parliamentary control, to fill the Commission's famous democratic chasm. It does no such thing. International bodies such as the European Commission are unformable. Half the trouble in Brussels, as at the UN, is the practice of allocating jobs and contracts by national quotas: not merit. Nor is the European Parliament appropriate as an auditing agent. It is not the fount of sovereignty for European government. That role is performed by the Council of Ministers. Since the Parliament does not raise taxes, it has no interest in cutting spending. It is a European House of Lords, a rest-home for sidelined politicians.

At such moments

there is no avoiding a reprise of first principles. Yes, there is a role for European co-operation. It is primarily in resolving the classic area of non-military conflict between nation-states, which is trade. Such co-operation must be subject to treaty and its structure must be strictly tailored to its purpose. Fair trade cannot become a Trojan horse through which supranationalism meddles in every detail of a nation's political economy.

Such co-operation is most effectively engineered through the Council of Ministers and its secretariat. This peripatetic Field of Cloth of Gold may be cumbersome, messy, loud and often ludicrous. Yet it is real, composed of elected, serving politicians. It is Europe's true confederal authority. It is the Council of Ministers that must sooner or later pick up the shambles to which Brussels diplomacy has reduced

European farming over the past three decades.

By comparison, the Commission is an eerie being, secretive and self-important. It can take aboard auditors galore. It can flatter the Parliament with question times and reports. It can even half-resign from time to time, much as Henry II took up the scourge. But it will make no difference. The Commission is a bureaucratic entity that does not mirror a political one. It can perpetuate but not legitimate itself. As Europe widens, it also fragments. The euro may prove to be the last cry of the postwar settlement.

To read yesterday's Brussels document is to wander to a land a thousand miles from Britain. Its inhabitants seem detached from the political cultures they supposedly serve and on whose taxes they depend; a world of ceaseless conferences, projects and programmes, of consultants, agencies, trips and back-handers. These international bodies are like the pre-Reformation episcopacy. Safe in their comfortable sinecures, they can rely on a cosmopolitan priesthood to whom they offer a plausible mission statement, first-class travel and no great burden of work beyond proselytising the cause. Nobody ever abolishes them.

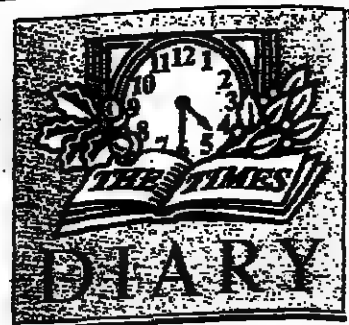
National governments, for all their imperfection, are the proper focus for European co-operation. The Council of Ministers is their club. The Council should have no need for supranational bodies such as a European Commission or Parliament. I do not believe there is any popular demand to establish a truly potent supranational government of Europe. The French, Spanish and Germans are no more eager than the British to submerge their national interest in a new supranationalism. They may be more canny in pursuing that interest in the councils of Europe. That is quite different. Mme Cresson, a true European? It is a joke.

A whistle-blower has stopped this particular train in its tracks. Today it stands puffing and blowing off steam while the crew argues on the platform. But until someone has the courage to admit that international bodies can sometimes outlive their usefulness, it will not be stopping for long. The sceptics have had their moment of joy.

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Simon Jenkins



## Gallery search

THE huge Nazi art scandal that hit the National Gallery is set to engulf the Tate. Sir Nicholas Serota, its Jewish director, has appointed a team of experts to examine the provenance of his collection, fearing that up to 700 works "could potentially bring problems".

As head of a cross-gallery working group into "tainted art", Serota (below) feels obliged to rummage in his own cupboard: toilers are sweating through his 61,000-strong collection — which includes daubs by Picasso, Matisse and Sargent — to check for looted works. "Only a few hundred at most could cause difficulty", I am assured.



PENGUIN-exporting is the latest regal money-spinner. Lord Harewood, the Queen's cousin, is packing 12 of the sea sorts off to Shanghai. Harewood House Bird Garden has signed a replacement: a mynah bird, who can do "very good impressions of fire engines".

■ DOUGLAS HOGG has found the solution to the dilemma that so denied papa's career: he intends to remain in the Commons and inherit the Viscountcy of Hailsham.

As part of his failed attempt to become PM, Quintin Hogg disclaimed his title as the 2nd Viscount in 1963 so that he could return to the Commons. He was given a life peerage seven years later, becoming Lord Hailsham of Saint Marylebone. Anthony King, constitutional expert, says: "You can't stop someone using a title. It's a jolly outcome." Will Baroness Hogg, Douglas's wife and the head of John Major's policy unit, start calling herself Viscountess?

THE Diary tip for Cheltenham, courtesy of Michael Howard, who now has more time to spend with his tick-tack: Teetom Mill for the Gold Cup; Norman Williamson for the jockeys' championship.



■ PAUL BURRELL is carrying on his mistress's good work by tending to Paul Michael Glaser — Starsky to David Soul's Hunch. The loyal butler to Diana, Princess of Wales, will meet Glaser next week: the actor was comforted by the Princess after his wife and daughter died of AIDS. "I grew up with Starsky and Hutch," says Burrell, who, faintly surreally, shared a table with Antonio "Huggy Bear" Fargas and Soul at Grosvenor House.

THE air will fill with light chatter about the Blackwell Turf as digging works at Scots when the manager has a hundred taxi drivers in the back of his restaurant: this is to celebrate its inclusion in the Knowledge, the only joint to be so honoured.

■ UNIONS are to make ministers pay Millennium Dome workers fat wages — for the inconvenience of seeing in the new epoch. After 90 performers were chosen for the millennial shows, Equity is demanding special rates and TV rights. The New Millennium Dome Experience Company is cross: "You can't compare performers to waiters getting £1,000 on the millennium. It's fairly clear the jobs entail working on New Year's Eve."

HAVING rallied his troops to "break free from the past", William Hague supped with Sir Edward Heath.

■ THAT champion of good causes, Mohamed Al Fayed, wants to launch an anti-smoking campaign. Inspired by Rory Bremner's impersonation, Mo wants to appear in adverts with the inscription "fug fags". ASH is now asking Mo to fund a legal campaign against British tobacco companies.

JASPER GERARD

## 'I cannot wait to welcome the first stout-booted green anorak who clambers enthusiastically over my garden fence'

This is a big morning for me. It is as big a morning as I have seen in 40 years, it is a morning that stands poised to change the entire course of my life, because, having spent those four decades searching for a style with a y, I suddenly find myself searching for a stile with an I. Two stiles, in fact — one for my eastern fence, one for my western.

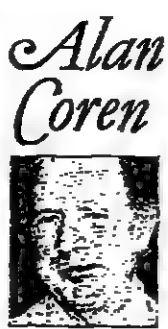
Now, you will say: hang about, that is a bit preposterous even for him, his fences should be called left and right, they are only 50ft apart, you do not need map co-ordinates for a suburban garden, a Cricklewood lawn does not call for a compass, you can distinguish between its herbaceous borders without a sextant, but you are wrong.

Any minute now, people will be tramping down my road with Ordnance Survey Sheet No 176 and they will be serious people,

they will have stout boots, they will have woolly hats, they will have lumpy knapsacks, and they will be thinking in terms not of left and right but of east and west, for that is the kind of serious people they are.

And you may be sure they will not take it at all kindly if, having gone to all the trouble of navigating by the stars and working out my longitude to three decimal points to get to my eastern or my western fence, they then find that they cannot climb over it. They will very likely start kicking it with their stout boots, or banging their stout sticks on it, or, at the very least, poking their woolly-hatted heads over it and shouting "Oy", and that is the last thing I want. Which is why the first thing I want is a pair of stiles, set in my two fences so that serious people can climb over them.

Because, thanks to the generosity of our great Environment Secretary, they will any minute now have the Right To Roam, and it is incumbent upon each and every one of us to be ready for them. Indeed, to welcome them with open arms, for they are paying us a very great compliment in wanting to ramble across our premises: they have waited a long time to see my daffodil fluttering and dancing in the breeze, to have a squint inside my lovely shed, to feel the hoe, sketch the shears, sniff the Parquat, to take one another's photographs leaning on my rustic Homestead bench, climb to the top of my towering rockery from which it is possible, on a clear day, to see three major roads, and, scrambling down to



Alan Coren

the shimmering expanse of water beneath, step across it, and find some sheltered spot — beside my sun-dappled car, perhaps, or on my mossy kitchen step — to eat their organic sarnies and brew their herbal tea.

I cannot for the life of me understand why so many of my fellow landowners were so enraged at the announcement of the proposed legislation, so fearful of the imminent incursions of the wandering herd, so desperate to hurt themselves into the battle to exclude him. For myself, I cannot wait for the first green anorak to clamper over my fence, mistake me for the garden-er, and, chucklingly set straight on the matter, whip out his ring-bound notebook and rain-

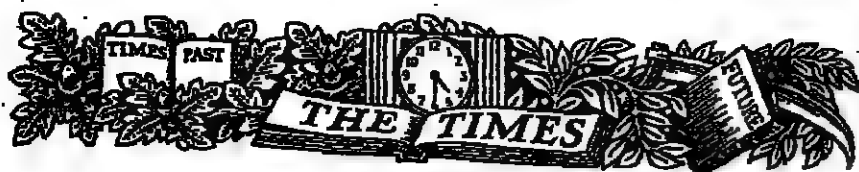
proof pen and begin keenly to quiz me on local lore.

How I long to point out the rutted bit of lawn which stands as undisputed evidence of where the extinct Cricklewood flood, through the board-packed wood of which my gnarled acacia is the sole survivor! How I yearn to take his arm and lead him to the sacred site, possibly by the dustbins, maybe behind the garage, where rumor has it that wretched Corens fought to the last man to thwart Caesar's march on Hemon! How I relish the thought of filling him in on the restless ghosts of drawn and quartered highwaymen who, having once lurked beside my compost heap to plague the Edgware Stage, now cry "Stand and deliver!" every Martinmas Eve. I may even take them up to the Big House to show them the unique systems of plumbing and pointing and guttering and

drive-laying created, just for me, by generations of itinerant artists who brought to Cricklewood the arcane techniques honed to perfection on the bottles of Limerick.

I may start doing cream teas. I may take a correspondence course in Morris dancing. I may embark upon the felt-tip monogramming of souvenir items in lustrous Crickleware from Bhs, or bottling zesty relishes and some remedies distilled from my own cankers, or stringing chic necklaces of interesting local pebbles, and set up Ye Olde Estate Suitcase, by the gate, to sell them. Aha, you cry, so that is the truth of it, he supports the Right To Roam because he sees a bob or two in it, but you are wrong, I support it because, for those 40 long years, I have been only a mere householder. But today, thanks to Michael Meacher, I am a landowner.





## GET OUT, STAY OUT

For any Commissioners to keep their jobs is illegal and wrong

The European Union today presents a sobering spectacle. Its untested currency has, with good reason, yet to win the faith of the markets. Unemployment higher than at any time since the 1930s is a standing reproach to its political class. Germany, its anchor economy, is politically as well as economically afloat, and failures to tackle structural reform are making the EU a high-cost, low-growth drag on the world economy. Trade wars with the United States go unresolved; and enlargement, Europe's great strategic imperative, is being held hostage to endless quarrels over controlling the EU's spending and cleaning up pork-barrel regional and structural funds and the indefensibly spendthrift common agricultural policy.

The EU's supranational institutions, thrust naked this week into the limelight, are in no better shape. The incompetence, cronyism, fraud and sharp practice that have long riddled the European Commission, publicly chronicled year after year by the EU's Court of Auditors in reports left to gather dust, have led only now — and only in the certainty that the Commission would otherwise be sacked by the European Parliament — to the collective resignation of its President, Jacques Santer, and the entire complacent, arrogant and mostly second-rate team selected, let it not be forgotten, by EU governments.

As for the Parliament, the triumphalist claims of MEPs to have struck a great blow for probity and democracy — conveniently, and not coincidentally, on the eve of facing their electorates — would be more credible were they not famously passengers on their own rich gravy train of excessive perks and fiddled expenses. And Pauline Green, the leader of its Socialist Group, has not so much discovered virtue but had it thrust upon her. Last December, when she tabled a motion of censure against the whole Commission while whipping her group to vote against it, her aim was to defeat the critics and protect the Commission's back. Only because some German and other north European Socialists broke ranks to side with a reforming minority did her tactic misfire, forcing Mr Santer to agree to the independent inquiry which issued its first report on Monday.

In limp language, whose meaning no bureaucrat can twist, these four wise men and one wise woman delivered, to their great credit, a coruscating indictment not just of individual commissioners, but of the entire management and corporate culture of the European Commission. They have made an incontestable case. In Tony Blair's words, for "root and branch reform". Will this finally happen? Not if governments, while talking grandly about Europe's great opportunity for "renewal", see no more evil in Brussels than is politically expedient. Not unless they change the management — the entire management — forthwith. Not unless they insist on credible systems to hold commissioners and bureaucrats to account. And not unless they appoint a new team with a brief not just to root out malpractices but to shut down entire programmes, such as tourism and humanitarian aid, which the Commission is incompetent to manage and which should never have been added to its ever-expanding empire. What is needed is a cultural revolution as fundamental as that imposed by the Trevelyan reforms on the British Army after the Crimean War.

Nothing is less certain. The suicide ritual was barely ended before this undead Commission rose unrepentant to its feet, with even Edith Cresson saying that she had no need to clear her name because the Commission was collectively responsible. Mr Santer had the gall to "note with considerable satisfaction that I am whiter than white", to make a bid to stay on himself and to insist that the entire commission could be "renominated". The independent experts observed: "The temptation to deprive the concept of responsibility of all substance is a dangerous one." To that temptation, the commissioners and most EU governments seem ready to yield.

This supposedly cathartic drama could end up as a "Japanese" purge, in which heads roll only to ensure that things continue much as before, with much the same discredited cast. That would be an outrage.

The German Government is thinking along these lines. It has called on the whole team to stay on as caretakers and is thinking in terms of a "new" interim Commission drawn mainly from the current 19 commissioners, to serve out this year. Mr Blair has demanded Mr Santer's head; but he has discredited himself as a reformer by insisting that Sir Leon Brittan and Neil Kinnock, the two British Commissioners, be reappointed. This special pleading will prompt other governments to say that their commissioners too should stay: none will want to admit that "their" people are more bent than others.

To reappoint them would be illegal under the Treaty on European Union. Article 159 states categorically not only that a resigning Commission President must be "replaced"; it says that "the duties of a member of the Commission shall end when he resigns... the vacancy thus caused shall be filled for the remainder of the member's term of office by a new member". In Brussels and EU capitals, lawyers are citing the more ambiguous Articles 144 and 158 as a justification for reappointing Commissioners. But these articles deal with a parliamentary vote of censure; since none took place, they are irrelevant to the case.

Sir Leon and Mr Kinnock did not have to resign; they did so as part of a collective manoeuvre to shield others, including Mr Santer, from taking individual responsibility. They must accept the consequences of that choice, and go; just as Mr Blair should be insisting, as did William Hague yesterday, that Mr Santer and other commissioners faulted by the inquiry should clear their desks at once. Brussels can function with a skeleton caretaker team, which in any event should serve for no more than a few more weeks.

Only if the Council of Ministers upholds the treaties and sweeps the table bare can they credibly claim to address, under new management, the agenda for reform. This should not be the partisan affair that Mr Blair, in his contemptuous treatment of Mr Hague's pertinent proposals in the Commons yesterday, made of it. Mr Blair has some good ideas, notably the need to establish individual accountability right through the bureaucracy, and to prevent improper uses of consultants and outside contractors. But he should have welcomed, rather than jeered at, the practical thinking on the Opposition benches.

Mr Hague is right that commissioners should abide by a clear code of ministerial responsibility, and that powers must be created to dismiss them individually for fraud or maladministration. He is right about the need for binding codes of conduct covering the appointment of senior Brussels bureaucrats, ending the commissioners' corrupt habit of "parachuting" former MEPs and cronies from their personal cabinets into lucrative Commission posts. He is right that Mr Blair's ideas about financial auditing do not go far enough and that the independence of a new anti-fraud unit must be guaranteed by having it report direct to the Council of Ministers. He is right that the solution to the Commission's plea that it does not have enough staff is to shrink its ever-expanding role by returning the administration of some programmes to national control.

There is no precedent for this crisis. That is where the "opportunity" that Mr Blair perceives resides. But he seems chiefly nervous that the "sad catalogue of negligence and mismanagement", which has not so much been revealed as finally thrust under the public's nose, will be "another chance to bash Europe". It is nothing of the kind. But timidity and half-measures on his part, at this critical point, could make his fears come true. For Europe's sake, Mr Blair will have face the necessity of offending some of his European friends.

## FIFTY-EIGHT DAYS TO DIE

The terrible case of Mary Ormerod

The allegations surrounding the death of 85-year-old Mary Ormerod provoke the deepest disquiet. Her doctor, Ken Taylor, is charged with "serious professional misconduct". Those three words camouflage the severity of the accusation — that he departed from the standards expected of healers to hasten her passing. "I did not kill" Mrs Ormerod, he claims. But the fear that he was unethically accelerated nature's course lingers, disturbingly. And so does the need better to guide doctors through the moral and medical dilemmas which govern the passage from painful illness to peaceful death.

Mrs Ormerod had suffered seven strokes and had senile dementia and mild Parkinson's disease diagnosed. The nurses claim that Dr Taylor ordered them to stop giving her a food supplement, and that they protested. Mrs Ormerod, it appears, was not in a permanent vegetative state. She was not being fed artificially, but could swallow food injected into her mouth. The hearing was told that Dr Taylor's medical notes did not suggest her condition was deteriorating. Fifty-eight days after the doctor withdrew her food, Mrs Ormerod died. The inquest recorded the cause as broncho-pneumonia, brought on by malnu-

trition. Dr Taylor hoped that, by his withholding food, his patient would simply "slip away". This act took him into a legal no man's land in which the guidance for treating patients is extremely vague. Had she been in a persistent vegetative state, Dr Taylor would have needed to refer her case to the courts before denying her nutrition.

Yet Dr Taylor claims that continuing to feed Mrs Ormerod was, in his mind, "inappropriate" and "inhuman", while his actions were "ethical and appropriate". He admits that he did not seek a second opinion before pursuing his treatment, in spite of nurses allegedly disagreeing with him. If his actions were "appropriate", why did Dr Taylor purportedly need to be persuaded to record his sudden change of treatment in the medical notes?

Even if the General Medical Council were to find Dr Taylor guilty as charged, he has already escaped a worse fate. A potential prosecution for murder was dropped, apparently for want of evidence. That such a pass was reached illustrates the pressing need for the British Medical Association to issue clear advice for treatment of patients like Mrs Ormerod. Doctors need a better compass to guide them through this moral minefield.

## 'Scandal and incompetence' of EU Commissioners

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 0171-782 5000

From Mr Malcolm Hill

Sir, Your leader today refers to the culture of corruption which has afflicted the EU since the 1950s.

Before damning individuals or the low standards of public administration in Spain and France, let it be remembered that the Council of Ministers is responsible for the growth of this culture. They have created policies of discredited protectionism and endorsed regulations of such silliness and complexity, that corruption on a vast scale has been unleashed in many fields: notably agriculture, fish, the single market and three fixed-currency regimes.

The belief that only a few individuals are tainted in the present exposure is ridiculous.

Yours faithfully,  
MALCOLM HILL,  
58a Abingdon Road, W8 6AP.  
March 16.

From Mr F. W. J. Wheatstone

Sir, By resigning en bloc the European Commissioners have taken the only sensible course in view of the refusal of Edith Cresson and perhaps other named Commissioners to resign.

However, senior Labour and Conservative politicians are in danger of undermining the whole reform programme. By calling for the retention of the blameless British Commissioners, a step which the Germans will, I am sure, follow, it will become a matter of French and Spanish pride that their two (each) Commissioners will be reinstated. If that happens little or nothing will be achieved.

Hard though it may be, Sir Leon Brittan and Neil Kinnock must allow their resignations to stand, if for no other purpose than to show that there is some honour left in British politics, and, after all, there must be some corporate responsibility.

The Government and the Conservatives must get together and reverse their "shoot from the hip" policy, or cynicism about politicians will become even greater than it is at present.

I am, your obedient servant,  
F. W. J. WHEATSTONE,  
Bassett Manor,  
Hartfield, Sussex TN7 4LA.  
March 16.

From Professor Ian Markham

Sir, In amongst the scandal and incompetence of the European Commission, we now have the best argument in favour of the European Union. A democratically elected Parliament held a corrupt Executive to account forcing it to resign: a model of democratic practice.

Sincerely,  
IAN MARKHAM,  
Liverpool Hope University College,  
Hope Park, Liverpool L16 9JT.  
March 16.

From Mr Colin Bullen

Sir, The exposure of the corruption and incompetence at the heart of the European Union is a vindication of those who have long opposed UK involvement in the whole project. However, this is far more than a matter of a few individuals, to be solved by a replacement of personnel. It results from the nature of the EU itself.

Now is the time to begin constructive disengagement from the EU, the end of which will see us remain friendly trading partners of European nations, but without the need to sacrifice all that we have built over the centuries.

Yours faithfully,  
C. R. BULLEN  
(Member, NEC, Campaign for an Independent Britain),  
119 Douglas Road,  
Tonbridge, Kent TN9 2UE.  
March 16.

From Mrs Jane Miller

Sir, Surely the collapse of the Commission is just another nail in the EU coffin. Whatever we may think of Hague, at least he is giving the Eurorealists a choice.

Yours faithfully,  
JANE MILLER,  
2 Adlam Buildings,  
Salisbury SP2 7SA.  
March 16.

From Mr Michael Hatch

Sir, Events in Brussels may prove to be a vital step in reforming the culture of dishonesty that has so long prevailed there; but who will carry out the reform?

MEPs have recently shown their determination to keep in place the institutionalised fraud whereby they receive payment for fictional expenses. It must be for the Government of individual member states to seize the initiative if we voters are to have any confidence in the EU.

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL HATCH,  
Hilly Meadows,  
Mortimer West End,  
Reading, Berkshire RG7 2AD.  
March 16.

From Mrs Marina Oliver

Sir, Should we be surprised? Most EU Commissioners were politicians, and politics requires a loud mouth and the ability to talk fast — not qualifications for competent administration. Mismanagement is inevitable in any large organisation if the managers' appointments are for political services rendered or to sideline a political embarrassment, instead of for proven ability.

Yours faithfully,  
MARINA OLIVER,  
Half Hidden, West Lane,  
Bledlow, Princes Risborough,  
Buckinghamshire HP27 9PF.  
marina.oliver@virgin.net  
March 16.

From Mr Michael Forrest

Sir, As the European Commission clearly cannot organise a whole stall it should surely not be left in charge of fishing regulations.

Yours sincerely,  
MICHAEL FORREST,  
Appletree, Thames Street,  
Sonning, Reading RG4 6UR.  
mforrest@sonning.demon.co.uk  
March 16.

From Mr Paul Asbury

Sir, Now that the EU Commissioners have quit, they should all be available to the International Olympic Committee on a full-time basis.

Yours etc,  
PAUL ASBURY,  
39 Belclare Street, The Gap,  
4061 Queensland, Australia.  
asburypaul@netscape.net  
March 16.

## The ever closer union

From Miss Dorothy Harris

Sir, Three cheers for the forthright article by Peter Shore which highlights some aspects of the true nature of the European Union ("Who are you kidding, Mr Blair?", March 8).

This is a much more realistic view than that portrayed by Mary Ann Sieghart (article, March 5). She seemed to believe that this country can be in the EU and remain free to choose what we take from it. The Maastricht treaty will not allow a two-tier Europe — "ever closer union" is the ultimate objective, and our fellow Europeans make no secret of that.

Ms Sieghart believes that Britain will be able to veto and resist, for instance, "endless proposals for harmonisation". In the Europe to which we unfortunately belong, such matters are not proposed, and then debated and whitewashed. Decisions of the European Court of Justice show quite clearly how tax harmonisation or any other European matter will come about. The recent decision in *ICI v Colmar* demonstrates how any European country can go to the court and challenge UK tax laws as being in opposition to the single market, and this country has then to comply. There will be nothing Tony Blair or any prime minister can do about it.

The EU is not democratic. All the laws we have to implement here come from 20 unelected people — the Commissioners. The Parliament, like the old Soviet one, is a sop.

When will people realise just what has happened to this country and its much valued freedoms, won over the centuries at such great cost?

Yours faithfully,  
DOROTHY HARRIS,  
Pot Hill House, Dial Post,  
Horsham, West Sussex RH13 8NX.  
March 9.

## The Bulger case

From Mr Roddy Gye

Sir, At the time of their conviction and sentencing, I argued through your columns (letter, December 2, 1993) for compassion for James Bulger's young killers. I was rewarded with an anonymous telephone call advising me to "try telling that to the Bulger family".

Of the various intents of a custodial sentence — containment, deterrence, rehabilitation — retribution is the least edifying in a civilised society. In the case of child criminals it should be unconscionable.

The Bulger family, in their continuing grief, should seek no comfort in the destruction of two more young lives. Nor, on the matter of sentencing, should the judiciary in Britain or Europe be swayed by the opinions of victims or their families, in the style of the Sharia courts. The criminal law serves and protects society as a whole, victims and culprits alike, and should be administered with dispassion.

Yours faithfully,  
RODDY GYE,  
9 Orlando Road, SW4 0LE.  
March 16.

## Questions for Hague on the euro

From Sir Julian Critchley

Sir, Could I through you put some questions about the euro to Mr William Hague? What is the point of trying to maintain that the EU is merely a grouping of sovereign states when the treaties on which it is based clearly endow it and its institutions with an element of supranationality?

What is the point of accusing continental politicians of wanting to abolish their own countries and create "a federal European superstate"? If this were true none of them would be re-elected and the East Europeans who have escaped from just such a superstate would not be queuing up to join.

If the future of Europe as laid down at Maastricht is so unattractive why have three EFTA states, Austria, Sweden and Finland, since joined, and also signed the Amsterdam treaty?

How do you think you are going to influence our allies and the Brussels Establishment by being negative, destructive and confrontational?

Have you ever wondered why the swings against Michael Portillo and Norman Lamont were well above average at the 1997 election?

Why did you demand a referendum on the Amsterdam treaty while opposing one on devolution? Both had constitutional implications.

Now that the Asian "tigers" have succumbed to cat flu, what new extra-European undertaking are you seeking to promote? A North Atlantic Free Trade Area?

If you make out, the continentals are so uncompetitive, how is it that over half the cars on our roads are made on the Continent? Over half our lorries come from Germany and Sweden, two countries with allegedly the highest social costs in the world. And how is it that the Germans export twice what we do, that Ford is transferring more and more car production from the UK to the Continent, and that BMW is to rescue Rover and not the other way around?

When it comes to fishing you say you wish to renegotiate the common fisheries policy (CFP) in order to take back so-called British waters. Have you calculated how much compensation you would be required to pay? More than enough to negate the British budget rebate, surely? Moreover, if the CFP is as disastrous as you make out can you explain why we sell £250 million of fish to France alone each year? Or why Cornish fishermen export 90 per cent of their catch to Spain, and the Tories failed to hold both St Ives and Lowestoft at the last election?

Is it not high time you told the party the truth about Europe?

Yours etc,  
JULIAN CRITCHLEY  
(Conservative MP,  
1959-64 and 1970-97),  
19 Broad Street, Ludlow SY8 1NG.  
March 11.

## Birkenhead and Scouse

From His Honour Judge John Morgan

Sir, Edward Grayson (letter, March 11) is a leading authority on sport and the law but his knowledge of accents north of Watford leaves much to be desired.

F. E. Smith, that great luminary of the Northern Circuit, whose lifelike portrait hangs proudly in the judges' library here in Liverpool, was born and bred in Birkenhead, a twopenny ferryboat ride from the Liver Birds. His accent, which C. B. Fry purported to recall from his Wadhams days, would have been as far removed from Gracie Fields's Rochdale as Geoff Boycott's is from Billy Connolly's. But then Fry only ever came north to score the odd century at Old Trafford and would know no better.

The unique quality of the accent Beryl Bainbridge discarded so early is said to derive from the draught from the Mersey Tunnel getting up sensitive Liverpool noses.

Yours faithfully,  
JOHN MORGAN,  
Queen Elizabeth II Law Courts,  
Derby Square, Liverpool L2 1XA.  
john.morgan11@virgin.net  
March 12.

Business letters, page 29

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.  
e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

## Linking race and ability in schools

From Mr Ray Ward

Sir, George Bridges's excellent article, "Playgrounds for political correctness" (March 12), is somewhat marred by his dismissal of the premise that colour and ability are linked followed by his statement that the performance of Indian, Chinese and other Asian pupils (carefully not mentioning other racial groups) continues to outstrip white children.

Doesn't that imply that colour — or at any rate race — and ability are linked?

Yours faithfully,  
RAY WARD,  
Flat 97,  
17 Sheppard Drive, SE16 3EJ.  
March 12.

From Mrs Marion Leeper

Sir, I was appalled by the complacency of George Bridges's article suggesting that multicultural education was nothing more than unnecessary political correctness. He suggests that being colour-blind is good enough: that teachers should stick to maths and English and that moral and social education is none of their business.

Many teachers are seriously trying to confront racism and develop an education fit for a multicultural society. To be told that we should stick to worrying about league tables and exam results and forget about the education of the whole child does not help us.

Children today are bound to meet people with different skin colours, cultures and religions. They have to learn that it is good to be different: that other cultures, as well as their own, are exciting, valuable and worth respecting.

I wish Mr Bridges could have seen the expression of joy on the face of the Japanese boy in my class when I introduced a topic on Japan, and seen the children learning about difference in its most practical form as they tasted sushi for the first time, wrote haiku poetry, played with chopsticks and origami.

This is not being politically correct: it is valuable learning, it is fun, and it may even improve our league-table performance.

Yours sincerely,  
MARION LEEPER  
(Primary school teacher),  
The Old Vicarage,  
4 Stretton Avenue,  
Cambridge CB4 3EP.  
March 13.

From Mr Michael Austin

Sir, Ofsted's own figures (report, March 11) show a school exclusion rate of 160 per 1,000 for black Caribbean pupils and 5 per 1,000 for Chinese. It is inconceivable to me that such a huge disparity could be accounted for by teachers' alleged racial prejudices, unwelcome or otherwise.

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL AUSTIN,  
10 Blagdon Close,  
Credition, Devon EX17 1EL.  
March 12.

From Mr John Whittle

Sir, If our education system is institutionally biased against certain ethnic groups, it follows with inescapable logic that it is also biased in favour of Chinese pupils.

I believe the safest assumption to make about any "official" statements on racism is, where these are not untrue, they may simply be untrue.

Yours,  
JOHN WHITTLE,  
185 Garstang Road,  
Preston PR2 8JQ.  
jppw@talk21.com  
March 12.

## Princes in the Tower

From Mrs Fabienne Smith

Sir, Your Diary (March 13) reports that Prince Edward's firm, Ardent, wants to exhume the two Princes in the Tower from their resting place in Westminster Abbey. This has already been done, in 1933.

In 1987 you reported the findings of a comparison of the Princes' bones with those of their cousin, Anne Mowbray, who was married to the younger Prince when she was six, and died aged nine ("Modern science convicts Richard III of murder", May 21, 1987).

The boys' blood relationship to Anne, and their precise age at death, were established, confirming that the skeletons were indeed the Princes', and that they died during Richard's reign.

Yours sincerely,  
FABIANNE SMITH,  
55 Manor Place,  
Edinburgh EH3 7EG.  
March 13.

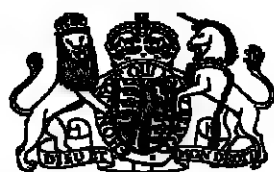
## Stealth defence?

From Mr Barry Pixon

Sir, So the Chairman of British Invisibles attended dinner with the Royal Navy Board, did he (letter, March 16)? How do you know?

Yours faithfully,  
BARRY PIXTON,  
6 Helvellyn Drive,  
Burnley, Lancashire BB12 0TA.  
barrypixon@lineone.net  
March 16.





## COURT CIRCULAR

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**  
March 16: The Queen held an investiture this morning at Buckingham Palace.

The Lady Susan Hussey has succeeded The Hon Mary Morrison as Lady in Waiting to The Queen.

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**  
March 16: The Duke of Edinburgh this morning departed Nice Airport, France, for Cameroon.

His Royal Highness, President Emeritus of the World Wide Fund for Nature - WWF International, this afternoon arrived at Nsimale Airport, Yaoundé, Cameroon.

The Duke of Edinburgh this evening attended a Reception at the British High Commissioner's Residence, Yaoundé, for the British Community.

His Royal Highness later attended a State Banquet at the Presidential Palace, Yaoundé, Cameroon.

**ST JAMES'S PALACE**  
March 16: The Prince of Wales this morning arrived at Heathrow Airport.

Mr Nicholas Archer, Miss Sandy Hughes, Surgeon Commander Ian Jenkins RN and Lieutenant Commander John Lavery RN were in attendance.

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**  
March 16: The Prince Edward, Patron, London Mozart Players, this evening attended a concert and dinner at St James's Palace to mark the orchestra's 50th Anniversary.

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**  
March 16: The Princess Royal this morning visited the Humble Family Service Centre, Hurdley, New Zealand.

Her Royal Highness later visited Dame Te Ata-Rangikahau for a traditional Maori Ceremony and Luncheon at Turangawaewae.

The Princess Royal, Patron of the International League for the Protection of Horses, this afternoon met

with their representatives at Te Rapa.

Her Royal Highness later visited Cambridge Thoroughbred Racing Stud.

The Princess Royal subsequently arrived at Wellington and was received by His Excellency Sir Michael Hardie Boys, Governor-General of New Zealand.

Her Royal Highness this evening attended a Reception given by the Governor-General of New Zealand at Government House.

**KENSINGTON PALACE**  
March 16: The Duke of Gloucester, Grand Prior, the Order of St John, accompanied by The Duchess of Gloucester.

Commandant-in-Chief, St John Ambulance Wales, and were received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant, Colonel Sir Richard Hanbury-Tenison.

The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester later attended a Reception at Tredegar House, Newport, Gwent, and were received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant, Colonel Sir Richard Hanbury-Tenison.

Their Royal Highnesses afterwards visited Cynha Primary School, Newport, Gwent, where the Duke of Gloucester presented the Young Lifesaver Certificate.

The Duke of Gloucester subsequently attended a Service of Celebration for the 900th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Order of the Garter.

The Duchess of Gloucester in the meantime opened the St John Ambulance County Borough of Newport Headquarters, Llynne Road, Gwent.

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Sunlight sparkles on a display of camellias at the RHS early spring show at Westminster yesterday.

## Yellow is the colour of success

By ALAN TUGOOD  
HORTICULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

**YELLOW** camellias appear to be on the increase. A group of three different cultivars forms the centrepiece of a gold medal display of trees and shrubs at the Royal Horticultural Society's early spring show.

Staged by Burncoose Nurseries, of Redruth, Cornwall, the exhibit features the well-known yellow camellia, "Jury's Yellow", plus two newcomers, "Gwyneth Morey" and "Brushfield's Yellow". All from different breeders, the flowers appear identical, with a yellow anemone centre and white outer petals.

Spring flowering bulbs, particularly daffodils, are also featured at the show, which opened in Westminster yesterday. Broadleigh Gardens, of Bishops Cleeve, Somerset, has won a gold medal for a collection of daffodils which includes a good selection of cyclamine hybrids with characteristic swept-back petals, an outstanding one being white and yellow "Trena".

In its gold medal display of spring bulbs, Potterton and Martin, of Nettle-

ton, Lincolnshire, is featuring a new dwarf cyclamine yellow with a crimson speckled lip takes pride of place.

Nesta J. Bulbs, of Stanmore, Middlesex, is showing arisemas and asarums, striking and often bizarre woodland perennials. One in particular is drawing the crowds - the ground-hugging *Asarum maximum* whose three-petaled, velvety, dark chocolate-brown flowers have a frosty white centre.

In the RHS early rhododendron competition the City and County of Swansea has won the class for three species (the pale yellow *R. macabeum* is outstanding), and Mr Edmund de Rothschild, of Exbury Gardens, Southampton, the class for three hybrids.

Mr D. Du Plessis, of Saltash, Cornwall, has fared well in the RHS early daffodil competition, winning the class for six cultivars and the prize for the best bloom with the hybrid "Trena".

The show, in the New Horticultural Hall, Grosvenor Street, Westminster, is open today from 10am to 5pm. The RHS London Orchid Show takes place at the above venue on Saturday, March 20, and Sunday, March 21, from 10am to 5pm.

## Dinners

Canada Club

Mr Robin Cook, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, was the guest of honour at a dinner of the Canada Club held last night at the Marlborough Hotel, Grosvenor Square, London.

The High Commissioner for Canada, Mr John Bridgman, Director-General of the Office of Fair Trade, and Mr Andrew Neil, Editor of *The Scotsman*, Scotland, were also present.

Mr John Evans, president, and Mr Michael Bussey were the principal guests.

**Service dinner**

Destroyer Club

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Julian Oswald, outgoing Chairman of the Destroyer Club, was the guest of honour at a dinner held last night at the Naval Club, Admiral Sir Jack Slater, the new chairman, presided.

**Institute of the Motor Industry**

Nick Scheele, Chairman of Jaguar Cars, was the guest of honour at a dinner held last night at the Savoy Hotel. Mr Martin Austin,

chairman of the council of the institute, presided.

**Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors**

Mr Tony Edwards presided at the annual dinner of the past presidents of the General Practice division of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors held yesterday at Over-Seas House, St James's.

Mr John Evans, president, and Mr Michael Bussey were the principal guests.

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Admiral of the Fleet Sir Julian Oswald, outgoing Chairman of the Destroyer Club, was the guest of honour at a dinner held last night at the Naval Club, Admiral Sir Jack Slater, the new chairman, presided.

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Nick Scheele, Chairman of Jaguar Cars, was the guest of honour at a dinner held last night at the Savoy Hotel. Mr Martin Austin,

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## Anniversaries

**BIRTHS:** Gottlieb Daimler, pioneer of motor cars, Schorndorf, Germany, 1834; Kate Greenaway, illustrator, London, 1846; Margareta Bondfield, first woman chairman of the Trades Union Congress 1923, first woman cabinet minister 1929-31, Chislehurst, Surrey, 1873; R.T. (Bobby) Jones, golfer, Atlanta, Georgia, 1902.

**DEATHS:** Marcus Aurelius, Roman Emperor 161-180, Vindobona, (Vienna), 180; Harold, King of the English 1035-40, Oxford, 1040; François, Duc de La Rochefoucauld, writer, Paris, 1680; Gilbert Burnet, bishop and historian, London, 1715; George Parker, 2nd Earl of Macclesfield, Oxfordshire, Shrewsbury, 1764; Daniel Bernoulli, mathematician, Basle, 1782; David Dale, industrialist and philanthropist, Glasgow, 1806; Friedrich Bessel, astronomer, Königsberg, 1846; Christian Doppler, physicist, Venice, 1853; Sir John Bagot Gubbins (Club Fash), Commander of the Arab Legion 1930-36, Sussex, 1984.

Today is the Feast of St Patrick, Apostle of the Irish.

Dr Marie Stopes opened Britain's first birth control clinic in North London, 1921.

More than 300 people were arrested during anti-Vietnam War demonstrations outside the American Embassy in London, 1968.

The tanker *Amoco Cadiz* ran aground off the Brittany coast releasing more than 220,000 tons of crude oil, 1978.

## Forthcoming marriages

**Mr A.G.A. Coombes** and Miss S.G. Whalley  
The engagement is announced between Andrew, elder son of Dr Gordon Coombes, of Warwick, and Miss Valerie Coombes, of Benfleet, Essex, and Sarah, daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Whalley, of Brims, New South Wales, Australia.

**Mr E.F.H. Kison** and Miss E.S.G.C. Naughton  
The engagement is announced between Emmanuel, elder son of Mr and Mrs Philip Kison, of Chilmark, Wiltshire, and Edwina, daughter of Lieutenant Colonel and Mrs Patrick Naughton, of Frome, Somerset.

**Mr T.J. LeRoy** and Miss J.A. Smythers  
The engagement is announced between Tim, elder son of Mr and Mrs Peter LeRoy, of Oxford, and Julie, daughter of Mr Conrad Smythers, of Devon, and Mrs Joan Smythers, of Chingford.

**Mr R.P.A. Monro-Davies** and Miss S.J. Blythe  
The engagement is announced between Benedict, son of Mr and Mrs A.R.D. Monro-Davies, of Barnes, London, and Elizabeth, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs R.M. Blythe, of Oakmore, Staffordshire.

**Mr R.J.R. Plinker** and Miss C.M. Sykes  
The engagement is announced between Robert, youngest son of Sir George and Lady Plinker, of Wiltshire, Worcestershire, and Catherine, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Richard Sykes, of Ockham, near Ludlow, Shropshire.

**Mr E.J.B. Seymour** and Miss M.A. Neil  
The engagement is announced between Edward, son of Mr and Mrs Michael Seymour, of Sturminster, Dorset, and Mrs Neil, daughter of Mr and Mrs Livingston Neil, of Blenheim, Oxfordshire.

**Mr J.C. Shaw** and Miss R.S.L. Waite  
The engagement is announced between John, younger son of Mr and Mrs Michael Shaw, of West London, and Rebecca, daughter of Mr Norman Waite, of Woburn Green, Buckinghamshire, and Mrs Richard Legg, of Veyan, Cornwall.

**Mr A.D. Wells** and Miss E.E.R. Burnham  
The engagement is announced between Andrew David, son of Mr and Mrs George Wells, of The White House, Upper Wootton Bassett, and Emma Elizabeth, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Burnham, of Church Hill House, Midhurst, and La Herradura, Cornwall.

## School news

**Chatham's School**

The Committee of Chatham's School of Music announce that Mrs Claire Moreland will become Head in September 1999, following Canon Peter F. Hullah's appointment as Suffragan Bishop of Ramsbury in the Diocese of Salisbury. Mrs Moreland is currently Deputy Head of Rugby School.

**Merchant Taylors' School**

The following scholarships have been awarded:

Major Scholarship: Stuart Chaplin, Holborn School; Jason Baker, Westminster School.

Minor Scholarship: Michael Laming, Orley Farm School; Adam Hulse, Reddish School; Samuel Popcock, Buxton Prep School; Nikhil Shah, Mount Stewart Junior; T.J. Smeeth, Redfield School; Daniel Smeeth, Redfield School; Robert Wells, Breakspere Junior School.

Major Scholarship: David Vinyard, The Beacon; Mr James James, Middlesbrough; Mr Gilbert Murray, Kesteven, Orley Farm.

Minor Scholarship: Mark Widdows, Northwood Prep.

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Minor



OBITUARIES

**Tony Rivers, architect and journalist, died of cancer on March 1 aged 54. He was born on May 5, 1944.**

TONY RIVERS was already 40 and a prolific architect when a chance anecdote turned him into a journalist who would proceed to write with an elegance and poise which many who had practised that trade all their life could never match.

The anecdote concerned a developer's insistence that Rivers pay 25 per cent of his fee for a putative project in a south-western town to a local architect, without whose involvement planning permission would not be granted. The local architect might have been the veteran of a DPP investigation, and might have erected a building on a sensitive site without planning permission, but he was at the

heart of the quasi-Masonic gang of estate agents and solicitors who ran that town.

Rivers walked away, denying himself what would, even after illegitimate deductions, have been a small fortune. He was far from unworried and was used to the semi-criminality of the construction industry, but he was a scrupulous man who, though fascinated by spivs and chancers, had no desire to become one himself. Asked to provide notes for an article on such scams for *Tatler*, Rivers happily exceeded his brief and delivered a 3,000-word finished piece which was funny, subtle, precise and moral (but not moralistic); it was serious writing.

This was during the second of Mark Boxer's four years as Editor of *Tatler*. The magazine was a world away then from the monument to snobish vacuity that it is today.

Boxer was delighted, gave Rivers licence to write about whatever he wanted, and persuaded him to give up his pseudonym, Max Gate (which is the name of the house in Dorchester that another architect turned writer, Thomas Hardy, designed for himself). Although Boxer could not persuade him to write full-time, Rivers became a prolific journalist as he was an architect. His energy was prodigious. His range was wide, thanks to his first-hand knowledge of milieux which career journalists are necessarily not privy to.

He was also a relentless autodidact, the result, perhaps, of having failed the 11-plus. Quite how someone of such intelligence and curiosity managed to fail that exam was a source of wonder to his friends, and would have been, had they known of it, to those

TONY RIVERS



Rivers: from prolific architect to energetic journalist

who read him in *The Times* Magazine, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Daily Mail*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Observer*, *Blueprint* and elsewhere. He also presented the BBC2 series *The Name of the Room*, and wrote the book of the series.

designed his first building, a warehouse, when he was 18. He subsequently studied at Hammersmith School of Architecture and Building under Arthur Korn, who opened his eyes to the extraordinariness of ordinary London, to its squares, gardens, terraces.

The first London practice he worked for was that of Howard V. Lobb, which specialised in transport buildings: service stations, garages, yacht clubs. In 1972 he was hired by Whitehouse Macfarlane, and five years later he co-founded Hodson Rivers. His friends, soon apprised of the imbalance of endeavour between the partners, suggested it would be better named Rivers & Tributary.

That partnership endured a decade. Rivers was only mildly rigid when his partner suggested that his journalistic fees should be paid into the

firm, but the partnership was dissolved amid acrimony and recrimination, and Rivers started anew in Camden.

Rivers's considerable output included service stations, golf club-houses, churches, shops and factories, but the building types that most interested him — and at which he excelled — were sheltered accommodation and the terrace. He would fling himself on the floor in a convincing depiction of a heart attack in order to demonstrate the uselessness of the single emergency button at dado height. He would scramble as though deprived of his motor functions and kick the wainscot if the entire wainscot could be summoned. He won awards for sheltered housing schemes.

In 1974 he designed the house that he lived in for the rest of his life. Highbury

Terrace Mews in that decade was akin to Camden Mews and Surrey Mews in the 1960s — a street where young architects built on a shoestring for themselves and their friends. Altogether he designed five houses there.

He belonged to no school. He was as exasperated by the jocular populism of postmodernism as he had been by the solemn nostrums of totalitarian modernism. He could execute deft pastiches of Victorian and Edwardian, but his best work displayed a grace and restrained elegance which recalled the humane modernism of Oud and Bodson.

His manner was diffident, sceptical and amused. He was a tolerant, agnostic who was happy that his wife, the former Mary Clark, should bring up their son and daughter in the Roman Catholic faith. They survive him.

KIRK ALYN

**Kirk Alyn, actor, died on March 14 aged 88. He was born on October 8, 1910.**

IN THE LATE 1940s Kirk Alyn was more commonly known to the cinema going public as Superman, the superhero from Krypton who dodged bullets, leapt over buildings and rescued kittens. Alyn was the first actor to play the Man of Steel on the silver screen, featuring in two action films *Superman* (1948) and *Atom Man vs Superman* (1950), but as with many who would follow him, he found his time after Superman hard, later lamenting that the part had ruined his life.

Devised by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster in 1934, Superman first hit the stands in *Action Comics* in 1938, and by 1940 had been adapted to radio and cartoon form. By this time the exploits of the man who fought for truth, justice and the American way had captured the imagination of a young generation, and in 1948 Columbia Pictures decided that Superman was ready for a slot on Saturday morning matinees, in the form of a 15-part serial.

Alyn was reluctant about taking on a serial-format motion picture, but it turned out to be a success, even though the process of recreating Superman's superpowers was hampered by the technology of the day. The standard line of the bemused onlooker may have been "Is it a bird? Is it a plane?", but rather than flying, the actor had to jump from window-ledge to window-ledge, with Alyn utilising a hidden mattress a few feet below to break his fall.

Born John Feggo Jr in Oxford, New Jersey, Alyn was already 37 when he took this role, having performed in vaudeville and chorus acts in New York. On moving to Hollywood, he gained a contract at Columbia where his first role was as a Portuguese sailor in *My Sister Eileen* (1942). He took other bit-parts there and at Republic, where he played in westerns such as *The Man From the Rio Grande* (1943).

After time in the US Navy, he rejoined Republic, where he enjoyed his first major part in the serial *Daughter of Don Q*. It was this performance that secured his role as Superman — though his physical resemblance to the comic character Clark Kent did also play its part.



Kirk Alyn: the first actor to play Superman in the cinema

Alyn starred elsewhere, such as in the crime thriller *Federal Agents vs Underworld Inc.* (1949), but after his second Superman serial, *Atom Man vs Superman*, he found it difficult to break the mould. Following *Radar Patrol vs Spy King* (1950) and *Blackhawk* (1952) he fell into obscurity. "Playing Superman ruined my career and I'm bitter about the whole thing," he later remarked, "I couldn't get another job in Hollywood."

George Reeves, who played the Man of Steel after Alyn, found being Superman even more exacting. He killed himself in 1959, and many more have since succumbed to what has been dubbed "The Curse of Superman". Its creators Siegel and Shuster sold the rights of their

creation to DC Comics for little over \$100, spending the remainder of their lives in legal wranglings with DC, while Margot Kidder, who played Lois Lane in the 1978 big-budget remake, was admitted to a mental hospital in 1996 after suffering from paranoid delusions. Only a year before, the star of that film and its three sequels, Christopher Reeve, was paralysed from the neck down in a riding accident.

Alyn himself spent the last years of his life suffering from Alzheimer's disease. He did have a small part in the Warner film of 1978, playing the father of Lois Lane, but it was later cut out for cinema. He married Virginia O'Brien in 1942. They divorced 12 years later. They had two sons and a daughter.

GENERAL SIR JOHN ARCHER

**General Sir John Archer, KCB, OBE, C-in-C UK Land Forces, 1978-79, died on March 12 aged 75. He was born on February 12, 1924.**

A MAN of great charm, but possessed nevertheless of an inner determination to succeed in all that he undertook, John Archer held key command and staff appointments in the Army in a 35-year career. In particular, he carried out a number of difficult tasks — notably those of painful retrenchment in various spheres — without generating controversy.

Arthur John Archer was educated at King's School, Peterborough, and St Catharine's College, Cambridge. He enlisted in the Army in 1943, and was given an emergency commission in the Royal Norfolk Regiment in 1944, followed by a regular commission in the Dorsetshire Regiment in 1946.

He started to make his name after attending the Staff College, Camberley, in 1956, when he was posted as a GSO2 in the Military Operations Directorate of the War Office in the aftermath of the Suez crisis. This earned him his MBE.

In 1963 he became GSO1 to the 3rd Infantry Division. This was soon on its way to Cyprus at Archbishop Makarios's request to intervene in renewed fighting between Greeks and Turks. Archer was responsible for the detailed staff work for

the division's rapid deployment by air to Cyprus; the re-establishment of a British military security framework on the island; and the eventual handover of responsibility to the United Nations. He was promoted OBE in 1964.

In 1965 Archer was given command of the 1st Battalion Devonshire and Dorset Regiment, and it fell to him to convert it into one of the first mechanised infantry battalions, equipped with the FV423 armoured personnel carrier. He was training his battalion in Libya when the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War broke out in 1967. Training was broken off and the battalion was redeployed to protect the British enclaves at Benghazi and El Adem from attack by Arab nationalists.

In 1968 he went out to Bahrain as a brigadier to command British Land Forces Persian Gulf a year after the British withdrawal from Aden. Anti-British feeling was still running high throughout the Middle East, requiring from him considerable tact and political awareness.

These qualities were even more useful to him in his next appointment, which was as Director of Army Public Relations in the Ministry of Defence from 1970 to 1972 when the final withdrawal from East of Suez was taking place and Army recruiting was in the doldrums. Extrovert, articulate and perceptive, he presented the Army to the media

with skill and forbearance.

His first appointment as a major-general was in command of the 2nd Division in BAOR. This was in 1972 during the short-lived Heath Government when the trauma of the Healey defence review period seemed to be over, and the Army on the Continent was benefiting marginally from resources released by the completion of the



withdrawal from empire. It was a false dawn for the Army and for Archer.

In the spring of 1974, he was back in Whitehall as the Director of Army Staff Duties, grappling with the organisational problems thrown up by the new Labour Government's renewed defence review and fighting to save the regiments from a further bout of amalgamations. He had to implement the Army Board's abortive attempt to reduce overheads by dispensing with the brigade level of command. Its

failure was no fault of his: the Army was just not ready for so radical a change and brigade HQs were reintroduced a few years later. It did, however, save some regiments for a few years.

In 1976 Archer was appointed C-in-C British Forces Hong Kong and Lieutenant-General of the Brigade of Gurkhas. Two years later, he took over as C-in-C United Kingdom Land Forces at a time when there was a slight upturn in Army fortunes stemming from the agreed Nato policy of increasing defence spending annually by 3 per cent. He was able to improve the operational readiness of the strategic reserve units, but it was yet another false dawn before the Not defence review after his retirement brought further cut-backs.

In retirement from 1979, Archer returned to Hong Kong, where he served from 1980 to 1986 as chief executive of the Hong Kong Jockey Club, a non-profit-making racing organisation, the proceeds of which are devoted to charitable projects of all kinds. At the end of this period he finally retired to Dorset.

Throughout his life he enjoyed flying light aircraft and gliders, and ran the Army Gliding Association for some years. He was Colonel of the Devonshire and Dorset Regiment, 1977-79.

John Archer is survived by his wife Marie, and by their two sons.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR IAN HARRIS

**Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Harris, KBE, CB, DSO, GOC Northern Ireland, 1966-69, died on March 12 aged 88. He was born on July 7, 1910.**

TOMMY HARRIS — as he was known for most of his life — was a Royal Ulster Rifleman who came from Southern Ireland and built up his connections with the North through his military career and, after his retirement from the Army, through his association with the Irish Bloodstock Breeders.

The son of J. W. A. Harris, owner of the Ballykisteen and Victor Stud, at Golden, Tipperary, he was educated at Portora Royal School, Enniskillen, and Sandhurst, and was commissioned into the Royal Ulster Rifles in 1930. He acquired his nickname Tommy because as a young man straight from Sandhurst he habitually referred to his rifleman, much to their indignation, as tommies.

In the early part of the war he held a series of staff appointments in England before being given command of the 2nd Battalion in August 1943, while it was training for the Normandy landings as part of the 9th Infantry Brigade. The brigade landed on

D-Day and was soon thrust into the fighting to stop the 21st Panzer Division breaking through to the sea between the 3rd Division and the Canadian Corps.

In the two days of heavy fighting it took to seal off the panzer breach the brigade commander was severely wounded and Harris took command for a short time. In the final battle for Caen, his battalion led the 3rd Division's thrust from the northeast into the ruins of the city where they joined hands with the Canadians fighting their way in from the west.

He led the 2nd Battalion throughout the battles in Normandy and in the advance across northern France. He was awarded the DSO for consistent gallantry in the autumn of 1944.

In 1945 he was sent out to the Far East in a series of important General Staff Officer appointments: 25th Indian Division in its advance down the Arakan coast in Burma; 7th Indian Division in the reconquest of Malaya that autumn; and the Rawalpindi Area during the withdrawal from India in 1947-48.

By 1951 he was back at last in Northern Ireland: first, commanding the 6th Battalion (TA) and then as Chief of Staff

Northern Ireland District. Next he commanded Malaya's 1st Federal Infantry Brigade, in operations against the Communist insurgents in the final phases of the Malayan campaign from 1954 to 1957.

He was then appointed to the key post of Deputy Director of Staff Duties (A) in the War Office, responsible for the



executive deployment of the Army worldwide. His first major-general's job was as GOC Singapore District in 1960, and this was followed by Chief of Staff (Contingencies Planning) at Supreme Allied Headquarters Europe in 1963. There he was in charge of Nato plans to deal with a Soviet threat to occupy West Berlin. His last military appointment was, appropriately,

back in Northern Ireland as its GOC in 1966, before Ulster was racked by the Troubles.

In retirement Harris was deeply involved in the amalgamation that formed the Royal Irish Rangers in 1967-68. As Regimental Colonel of the Royal Ulster Rifles and the senior of the three Irish regimental colonels, he steered it through against tough opposition.

After leaving the Army he returned to his family partnership and management of the Ballykisteen Stud in Tipperary, and to running the Victor Stud. He was initially very successful, Auction Ring becoming champion sire in 1979. But bad debts plagued him in the 1980s and it took the stud some time to recover.

He was chairman of the Irish Bloodstock Breeders Association from 1977 to 1979, and its president from 1984 to 1988.

In 1945 he married Anne-Marie Desmoutreux, whom he had met the year before when his regimental headquarters occupied her family's chateau in Normandy. With her support and encouragement he played a leading role in establishing and running the British Army Museum in Caen.

He is survived by her and by one of their two sons.

DEATH OF QUEEN MILENA: A FAMOUS BEAUTY

Paris, March 16  
Antibes, near Nice, at 1.30 this morning. The Grand Duchess Nicholas and several of her other children were present.

The Queen of Italy, who had remained with her mother for several days, left Cap d'Antibes at midnight by special train for Rome, and a telegram informing her of her mother's death was handed to her when the Royal train reached Genoa. Her Majesty immediately returned to Antibes.

M. Armand Bernard, Prefect of the Alpes Maritimes, conveyed to the Queen of Italy this morning the sympathy of the President of the Republic and of the French Government.

Queen Milena of Montenegro was the daughter of the Montenegrin Voivode Vukotich, whose family was connected with the princely house of Petrovitch. She was born on May 5, 1847, and was brought up in the patriarchal traditions of the Black Mountains. It is said that as a little girl she sometimes tended her father's flocks on the upland pastures. On November 9, 1860, at the age of 13, she was married to Nicholas I (who had

ON THIS DAY

March 17, 1923

One of the children of the beautiful Queen Milena, Princess Helena, married the future King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy. The statuesque queen towered over her husband who was said to be barely 5ft tall.

recently succeeded his uncle, Danilo I, as Prince of Montenegro), in the little Vlasica church at Cetigne, where, 50 years later, the Royal couple — the Prince had assumed the title of King on the previous day — celebrated their golden wedding with an interesting ceremony, which was followed by a series of enthusiastic and picturesque demonstrations on the part of the people. They lived to celebrate their diamond wedding, but in less happy circumstances. Queen Milena possessed great beauty, which she retained unimpaired in advancing

years, a dignified presence, and a peculiarly sweet and engaging manner. She took no part in politics, and in accordance with the custom of the country, confined herself to domestic interests, the care of her large family, and works of charity. King Nicholas, who visited the British Army in France during the war, steadfastly refused to recognize the annexation of his kingdom by Peter I of Yugoslavia, who had been the husband of his eldest daughter, Princess Zorka. He died at Antibes on March 1, 1921, and a week later his eldest son, Prince Danilo, abdicated in favour of his nephew, the young Prince Michael, then 12 years old, the son of the late Prince Mirko, of Montenegro, under the regency of Queen Milena.

Of the Queen's eight surviving children, the eldest daughter, Princess Milica, is married to the Grand Duke Peter Nikolaievich, the second, Princess Stana, to the Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolaievich, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Armies in 1914-15; the third, Princess Helena, is Queen of Italy; the fourth, Princess Anna, is the wife of Prince Francis Joseph of Battenberg. Her other children, Princesses Xenia and Vera and Prince Peter, are unmarried. It is considered improbable that the visit of the King and Queen to Italy will need to be postponed on account of the death of Queen Milena.

PERSONAL COLUMN

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## Dracula's dancing queen

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BUSINESS • ARTS • HOMES • SPORT • TELEVISION

# THE TIMES



## Rattle at his best

Arts, page 36

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY MARCH 17 1999

French offer up to \$6bn for stake in troubled Japanese carmaker

## Renault takes wheel at Nissan



Schweitzer: veto power

RENAULT, the French carmaker, moved yesterday to become one of the world's big five manufacturers when it offered to buy a 35 per cent stake in Nissan, the troubled Japanese auto group.

The deal is likely to be worth between \$4 billion and \$6 billion (£2.5 billion to £3.7 billion). It raises questions over the long-term future of Nissan's factory in Sunderland, although most analysts expect the plant to survive.

The stake taken by Louis Schweitzer, the chairman of Renault, will give him veto power over Nissan and the likelihood of three seats on the Japanese company's board.

Carlos Ghosn, the second-in-command at Renault, who is given much of the credit for the French company's return to financial health, is tipped to become the director-general of Nissan.

The two carmakers are likely to share research and development costs in the short term and manufacturing plants in the longer term.

With Nissan, Japan's second-largest car manufacturer after Toyota, sagging under an excess production capacity, estimated at almost 500,000 vehicles a year, French analysts called into question the future of Nissan's Sunderland plant.

## Business Today

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## The long haul

UK truckers fly the flag of convenience

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FTSE 100	5201.5	(-4.9)
Yield	2.52%	
FTSE All Share	2552.31	(-1.21)
Nikkei	19072.32	(+23.22)
New York	8967.83	(+8.88)
Dow Jones	1306.54	(+1.28)
S&P Composite		

US RATE		
Federal Funds	4 3/4%	(4 3/4%)
Long bond	5 3/8%	(5 3/8%)
Yield	5.45%	(5.52%)

LONDON MONEY		
3-month interbank	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Libor long gilts	117.23	(118.64)

STERLING		
New York	1.6248	(1.6228)
London	1.6243	(1.6217)
Paris	1.4893	(1.4822)
Sfr	1.3915	(1.3726)
Yen	191.43	(191.64)
S index	102.8	(102.3)

DOLLAR		
London	1.0914	(1.0923)
Sfr	1.4657	(1.4642)
Yen	117.25	(117.58)
S index	102.8	(107.9)

NORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (Jun)	612.73	(N/A)

GOLD		
London close	8263.85	(8269.85)
* denotes midday trading prices		
Exchange rates Page 28		

## Dow Jones index scales landmark 10,000-point peak

By ALASDAIR MURRAY AND ANDREW BUTCHER

SHARES on Wall Street yesterday cleared the 10,000 mark for the first time, capping a four-and-a-half-year bull run that has seen the market rise some 6,000 points.

It took just 20 minutes of trading for the Dow Jones industrial average to scale the final 42 points, reaching a peak of 10,001.12.

A cheer went up from the floor of the New York Stock Exchange and there was even some half-hearted confetti-throwing before traders returned to their posts.

The foray into uncharted territory, however, proved short-lived, with the Dow quickly falling back into negative territory as profit-takers took the landmark as a cue to move back into the market.

By lunchtime in New York, the Dow was standing down 20 points on the day. Analysts were divided on whether the Dow would continue to push on to new heights, with market bears arguing that every new Dow record brought a sharp correction closer.

Lois Todd, head of equities trading at JC Bradford and Co, said: "There's not enough leadership to take this market to major new highs."



Cheers of traders at the historic moment later subsided as the Dow fell into negative territory

## Surplus suggests Brown will beat forecasts

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

THE Government recorded another healthy budget surplus in March, leaving the City convinced that the Chancellor will beat his revised full-year borrowing forecasts.

The Treasury, however, insisted that the traditional year-end departmental spending spree would leave the final figure close to the Budget prediction of a £5.2 billion surplus.

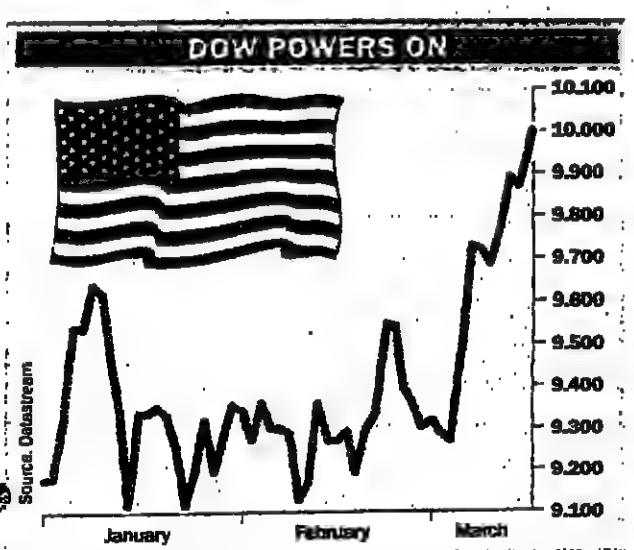
February's public sector net cash requirement (PSNCR) surplus of £1.5 billion was marginally below City expectations. However, the Government is in surplus to the tune of £15.13 billion over the first 11 months of the financial year, compared with just £6.18 billion at the same point last year.

Adam Cole, UK economist at HSBC, said the end-of-year spending spree would need to be £4 billion larger than in the same month last year for the Government to hit its target. Although spending has crept up over the past 12 months, it is only running about 2.5 per cent higher than in 1997-98.

Mr Cole said: "Gordon Brown could well find himself with considerably more room for manoeuvre in next year's Budget than his current arithmetic implies."

LINKS

WEBSITE: www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/  
Financial history website:  
http://www.bbc.co.uk/1/finance/uk\_economy/990317.shtml



## Goldman partners in line for \$7m

By CAROLINE MERRELL, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

PARTNERS in Goldman Sachs, the US investment bank, will average make \$7 million (£4.2 million) each under the terms of the flotation, revealed yesterday.

Eleven per cent of the bank, worth a total of \$3 billion, is to be sold off. About half of that, 5.5 per cent, is to be divided among the bank's 220 partners, who include Gavyn Davies, the bank's chief economist based in London and an adviser to the Prime Minister.

The amount each partner will get depends on their length of service. Partners will not be

able to access their shares for between three and five years. It is as yet uncertain what proportion of the residual 89 per cent is held by each partner. It is these stakes that make each of the partners worth tens of millions of dollars.

About 2.5 per cent will be divided among the bank's other 13,000 employees, giving average windfalls of about £50,000. Another 1 per cent will be reserved for former partners of Goldman Sachs. The public will be offered about 1 per cent with the remainder, about 1 per

cent, to be held by Sumitomo of Japan.

Shares in Goldman Sachs are expected to trade at about \$40 to \$50. The bank wants to raise capital so it can compete on a global scale with other US investment banks.

Goldman was forced to pull its flotation last year because of the sudden collapse in world markets.

At that time some within the bank voiced concerns about the flotation. They felt that it would change the unique culture of the bank. The original flotation plan did not give

shares to all employees. Last week partners voted overwhelmingly in favour of the new flotation plan.

The details came as the bank reported first-quarter pre-tax earnings of \$1.18 billion (\$1 billion). Net revenues were \$2.9 billion and expenses were \$1.8 billion.

David Viniar, chief financial officer, said: "The firm's investment banking business performed well during the quarter particularly in financial advisory and debt underwriting, and assets under management continued to increase."

## New policing move for the boys in Bluewater

By PAUL ARMSTRONG

THE owners of the £1.2 billion Bluewater shopping complex in north Kent have struck a radical deal with the local constabulary, buying themselves the services of 22 police officers at a cost of £750,000 a year.

The contract with Kent police guarantees that at least six bobbies are on the beat at Bluewater at any one time. The service applies around the clock, seven days a week.

It is thought to be the first time a British police force has struck such an arrangement with the private sector, though officers are provided for a fee to police events that have potential for public disorder, such as football matches. Kent police also have an arrangement to provide a permanent presence at the Channel Tunnel.

Lend Lease, the developer behind the project, proposed the deal after its research found that shoppers preferred bobbies, particularly female ones, to provide security service.

Stuart Hornery, chairman of Lend Lease, said that the annual fee would ensure Kent police broke even on the deal. Bluewater has also provided a police station at the complex.

Mr Hornery said that the developers involved the police heavily in planning Bluewater. A spokesman for Kent police said officers had provided advice on key crime prevention measures.

Developers, page 29

## Unigate in Terranova hostile bid

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

UNIGATE, the food manufacturing group, has launched a hostile cash bid worth £228.5 million for Terranova, the chilled foods company that was spun off from Hillsdown last year.

Terranova immediately rejected the £250 share offer, calling it "an opportunistic bid designed to capture Terranova on the cheap". Shares in the company leapt from 104½p to 135½p, as investors bet on Unigate having to increase its offer. Unigate's shares were steady at 410½p.

Unigate has long been in pursuit of the Terranova business, having come close to buying it before its demerger from Hillsdown.

Sir Ross Buckland, chief executive of Unigate, said that acquiring Terranova would create a sizeable European foods business. "A standalone Terranova has uncertain prospects, while our cash offer represents certainty," he said.



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## Premier Oil under siege

By CARL MORTISHED

PREMIER OIL is under siege from a rebel shareholder group that wants the company to pull out of Burma and sell assets in other politically isolated countries, such as Albania and Cuba. Peter Felter, a lawyer at Clyde & Co, has teamed up with Viscount Cranborne in a bid to launch a management takeover of the company whose chief executive is Charles Jamieson. Mr Felter is proposing himself as chief executive and admits candidly: "I am trying to effect a shareholder rebellion." He reckons the Premier management's strategy has failed and objects to the Burmese investment on moral, financial and political grounds. He said: "The political reality is the pro-democracy leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, has accused Premier of financially and morally supporting the regime. There are US sanctions against Burma and if the regime falls Premier could lose out badly." The rebels have created a website to publicise their proposals but have yet to requisition a meeting of shareholders. Premier shares were unchanged at 13½p yesterday, against a 12-month high of 51p.

WEBSITE: www.premier-oil.co.uk

## Tarmac aims to unlock value with demerger

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY  
INDUSTRIAL  
CORRESPONDENT

TARMAC yesterday pinned hopes of a share price surge on its plans to split the business into two companies. The demerger could be completed by the autumn. The company is spinning off its construction services division from the traditional building materials business. The move was heralded last month after the failure of a £1.8 billion merger with Aggregate Industries. Sir Neville Simms, who will lead the construction division as chairman and chief executive, said: "We will be able to unlock far more value by demerging." Shareholders will vote on the plans in the summer and the split should happen two months after that. Sir Neville, currently group chief executive, said the demerger would not immediately lead to fresh merger moves with a rival. A number of other names, such as Amec and BICC's Balfour Beatty, have been linked with Tarmac, but Sir Neville said that no talks were under way. However, analysts believe that the division will make would-be partners far more interested in Tarmac, whose share price has languished and which is seen as increasingly diverse as construction



Sir Neville Simms said the demerger would not lead to fresh merger moves with a rival

services moves further from the buildings side. Construction services comprises the higher-margin businesses of facilities management and the company's Private Finance Initiative work, which has been dogged by contract delays and bureaucratic procedures. The building materials side

of Tarmac will retain the company name and have Roy Harrison, the director in charge of that operation, as its chief executive, with Sir John Banham, the current Tarmac chairman, retaining his role. Debt will be split between the two companies and both will have progressive dividend

policies, Tarmac said. Tarmac said pre-tax profits for the year to December 31 rose to £131.4 million from £115.2 million. Earnings per share increased 10.7 per cent to 9.3p. The final dividend of 2.8p (2.65p) lifted the total 2.7 per cent to 5.8p.

Tempus, page 25

## Capital in second casino writedown

By JASON NISSE

CAPITAL CORPORATION, the troubled gaming company, yesterday wrote down the value of one of its casinos and came under pressure to write down the values of its other two. The group blamed the increase in gaming levy, made in the Budget last year, for a £2.5 million writedown in the value of the Cromwell Mint, the Kensington casino it bought two years ago for £22 million. This is the second writedown made by Capital since it bought Cromwell and cuts the carrying value to £18.2 million. Analysts queried why the group had not also written down the value of its two other casinos, Crookford's and the Colony Club. Capital admitted that the clubs had been independently revalued this year. The company declined to comment on revelations in *The Times* that its auditor, Deloitte & Touche, is being investigated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England & Wales over its work on Capital's accounts. The combination of the Cromwell writedown, the increased gaming levy and an absence of high-rolling gamblers led to a fall in pre-tax profits from £12.4 million to £3.54 million in 1998. Earnings fell from 7.86p to 1.64p. A final dividend of 2p makes a total of 3p (5.125p) for the year.

## De La Rue jobs go as demand slows

ABOUT 130 jobs in Britain are to be axed in a widespread restructuring at De La Rue, the banknote printing group. The company is shedding 500 jobs worldwide at its cash systems division, which designs and makes hole-in-the-wall machines and other cash-counting devices. The British jobs will be lost in Portsmouth, where the group is merging its two operations on to one site. The poorly performing division has been hit by slowing foreign demand. Ian Much, chief executive, yesterday pledged that the move was the group's last big restructuring. Last year De La Rue announced 375 job losses in its main banknote-printing plant in Gateshead. Its cash-handling systems division currently accounts for about 40 per cent of group turnover. The total restructuring bill is to come to about £43.9 million, with a total cash cost of £30 million. De La Rue shares rose 7½p to 217½p.

## Charter flags disposal

FURTHER restructuring lies ahead for Charter, the engineering business whose shares have halved to 38½p from 77½p over the past 12 months. Announcing a 3.6 per cent slide in underlying pre-tax profits to £85.1 million for 1998, the company said it wants to sell its specialised engineering business, which contributed operating profits of £28.9 million last year. Charter is holding the total dividend at 31.5p, with an unchanged final of 22p, despite a 2.8p fall in underlying earnings to 57.6p a share.

## Coke bottler in red

Coca-Cola Beverages, the bottling company, said it was over the worst of the downturn in Eastern Europe as it returned a £15.5 million loss for 1998 (£24.1 million profit). It took a £10.3 million charge for hyper-inflation, £84.3 million for depreciation of equipment and £14.2 million for a factory closure. Underlying profits fell to £124 million (£133 million) with headline losses equating to 0.1p (1.5p earnings) per share. There is no dividend. The shares, floated eight months ago, fell 2½p to a low of 89p.

## Chadburn agrees bid

THE board of Porter Chadburn, the label manufacturer, has agreed to a £46.6 million takeover offer from Mail-Well, the US-based printing company. The bid, at 38½p per share, represents a premium of 66 per cent of the closing price of Porter shares before yesterday's announcement. Although based in London, over 70 per cent of Porter's sales are in the US. The purchase is aimed at expanding Mail-Well's range of labels in North America.

## Dickins's new label

ROB DICKINS, the millionaire music executive who discovered The Corrs and helped to relaunch Cher's career with *Believe*, her bestselling single, yesterday formed a joint venture record label with Sony Music called Instant Karma Records. Dickins, 48, who left his job last year as chairman of Warner Music in the UK — after a clash with his US bosses — turned down a more lucrative label deal with his former employers to work with Sony.

## B&B launches defence

BRADFORD & BINGLEY yesterday launched a £5 million campaign in defence of its mutual status, after a resolution to convert the building society into a bank was tabled last year by self-confessed carpetbagger Stephen Major, supported by 70 other members. The society has sent out voting packs to its 2.5 million members, who must complete and return the forms by April 23 or attend the annual meeting on April 26.

### EXCHANGE RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.70	2.52
Austria Sch	21.47	19.81
Belgium Fr	63.21	58.25
Canada \$	2.608	2.420
Cyprus Cyp £	0.9051	0.8338
Denmark Kr	11.85	10.78
Spain Ptas	5.75	5.34
Finland Mk	8.40	8.05
France Fr	10.23	9.45
Germany DM	3.072	2.851
Greece Dr	504	468
Hong Kong \$	13.43	12.23
Iceland Kr	129	109
Indonesia Rp	17972	12972
Ireland P	1.2263	1.1373
Israel Sh	6.81	6.25
Italy Lira	3558	2819
Japan Yen	206.29	188.78
Malta M	0.874	0.815
Netherlands Gld	3.470	3.175
New Zealand \$	3.22	2.98
Norway Kr	12.31	11.37
Portugal Esc	310.82	288.79
S Africa Rd	10.80	9.85
Swan Pts	250.05	240.38
Sweden Kr	14.17	13.07
Switzerland Fr	2.533	2.315
Taiwan Nt\$	80.198	59.223
USA \$	1.732	1.689

Notes for small denomination banknotes only as quoted by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates are at close of trading yesterday.

## Rhodia on brink of £455m A&W victory

By CARL MORTISHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

THE battle for Albright & Wilson appeared to be all but over yesterday when Rhodia, the French chemicals company, trumped a US bid for the phosphates group with a £455 million cash offer. Rhodia has secured the support of Phillips & Drew Fund Management for its 145p-a-share offer, an 11 per cent premium to the 130p bid from Albemarle, announced earlier this month. PDFM has committed its 23 per cent stake to Rhodia unless a third party offers to pay more than 160p for its shares. Analysts were sceptical that a higher offer would be forthcoming. Michael

Eastwood, of Dresner Kleinwort Benson, said: "I think it is over." He pointed to the synergy benefits available to Rhodia, which already has large phosphate interests. Albemarle is set to make a profit on the 18 per cent stake it has built up. Rhodia's bid is being made through an off-balance-sheet vehicle, ISPG, which is wholly owned by Donau Chemie, an Austrian company formerly controlled by Rhodia. It is designed to keep the cost of the bid off the balance sheet of Rhone-Poulenc, Rhodia's 60 per cent shareholder. Rhone-Poulenc is currently in difficult merger discussions with Hoechst.

## Peer buys Mirror's old HQ for £40m

By RAYMOND SNOODY, MEDIA EDITOR

LORD Hamlyn of Edgeworth, the Labour-supporting publishing millionaire, has bought the former stamping ground of another of Labour's print tycoons, the late Robert Maxwell. The Mirror Group, which is now based in the London Docklands, yesterday said that it had sold its old headquarters in the centre of the capital at Holborn, for £40 million. A private company of Lord Hamlyn, 73, a former director of Reed International, in league with Chelfield, the property group headed by Elliott Bernerd, has bought the site for £31 million in cash. They are also taking on £9 million of debt.

Detailed planning permission already exists for a new glass and steel building on the site designed by Sir Norman Foster & Partners. The lettable area is about 320,000 sq ft and the building will provide a new headquarters for Andersen Consulting. The new building, which is expected to cost about £135 million, is scheduled to be completed by March 2001. The Mirror, which is currently under offer from two hostile bidders, is seeking to reduce debts and slim down to its core interests of national and regional newspapers.

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مكتبة النور



Wall Street traders indulged in a bout of irrational exuberance as the Dow Jones index broke through 10,000 for the first time.

Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan was probably not joining in the cheering. It was over two years ago that he warned of the dangers of the stock market over-heating, coining the phrase which will now be permanently appended to his name. Just as Jim Callaghan has never been able to throw off the image of him cheerily remarking "Crisis? What crisis?" as the emergency squad from the IMF headed to Britain, Greenspan's hang-dog visage will always be seen mouthing a warning against the market's "irrational exuberance".

Yet when he first started to voice his concern, the Dow stood at just 6,400. Some investors were not paying attention. Since it started this bull run four years ago, the US index has grown by 160 per cent. Faced with such defiance, Mr Greenspan has become more muted in his qualms but, if he felt uneasy in 1997, there is every reason why he should feel even more so now.

The levels of US share prices are as sustainable as yugic flying. The performance of corporate America does not justify price levels which see even non-internet stocks selling at 40 times earnings and yields which barely register on the payout scale. Mr Greenspan does not want to be seen as a scaremonger but he did mention

in his evidence to the Senate Banking Committee last month that "Equity prices are high enough to raise questions about whether shares are overvalued."

Mr Greenspan is obviously not convinced that we have entered that wonderful world of the new paradigm in which the old rules do not apply. He is suspicious about the dawning of a new age, free of booms and busts, where markets head ever upwards, and we all join hands in a virtuous circle of increased investment, higher productivity, higher wages and increased asset prices.

The chairman of the Fed is a realist not an idealist. America has a huge market of its own but it cannot remain immune from what goes on in the rest of the world. The Asian crisis may have bottomed but the climb out of depression will take several years. The Latin American mess is far from settled. In the meantime, these countries have excess supply and promise intense competition. Corporate profits in the US will show the strain and it is by no means certain that investors will shrug their shoulders and say that they are there for the long term. So far, US savers have demonstrated remarkably strong nerves but they are stretched taut now. Some may

see the magical 10,000 as the point at which to take their hands off the wheel and run for cover.

When that happens, London will feel the chill. The FTSE has been pulled along in the wake of the Dow and will not be able to resist the tug when it heads in the opposite direction. Optimists maintain that the weight of money looking for a home will ensure both markets remain strong. But they said the same about Japan.

### EU agenda slips its 2000 deadline

The plan is not working. German ministers should have begun trolly round the EU yesterday to drum up support for Agenda 2000, the package of budgetary and voting reform to prepare the way for the next lot of entrants. Instead, having introduced each other to their new Finance Minister, they were scurrying around wondering what you do when the entire Commission resigns.

## COMMENTARY

by our City Editor

Budget talks were already getting not very far slowly, having agreed another mind-numbing compromise on farm protection that requires yet higher subsidy spending. Even touchier ground was about to be broached, including the fate of Britain's rebate.

Outgoing commissioners already complain that they did not have enough money to tackle an ever-rising workload properly, let alone to root out fraud. Given that mismanagement, few member states are likely to be keen to increase the budget even by the £20 billion allowed under the most recent dispensation. Better for the Commission to do less.

Some are already casting envious glances at the eventual £11 billion a year reserved for new entrants. Put off enlargement and you could divert most of that.

Who should pay more is even more contentious. Charles Jenkins, who yesterday launched a pamphlet on the issue for the Federal Trust, says that Britain should give up its special rebate. Instead, he wants a general re-

bate system. The net contributions of each of the wealthier members would be balanced by a general adjustment so that they corresponded roughly with national income.

As even Mr Jenkins concedes, Tony Blair cannot afford to "give in" over the UK rebate if he wants to entice his flock into the euro. Likewise, any general rebate system would require statesman-like and courageous gestures from the big net gainers, notably France. In other words, it would be extremely expensive.

The French Government may be prepared to send Edith Cresson to the guillotine, provided that the President of the Commission remains a francophone. It is not likely to hand back all those farm subsidies from German industry that began the EU.

The German presidency may not instal a new Commission until its mandate ends in June. Amid all this delay, confusion and excitement, the chances of the rump Commission and the Council of Ministers agreeing a

new budgetary system by then look slim. So the whole muddle will have to be handed on to the Finnish presidency and a "new" Commission, if there is one.

Those waiting to enter the EU for the new millennium may be knocking on the door until their knuckles are sore.

### End of the track for Nissan

Nissan should not rely on Gallic generosity either. France invented the "yellow peril" scare a century ago, and the French motor industry has been Japan's biggest enemy in Europe. A link with Renault would be no more than unconditional surrender for Japan's indebted number two motor manufacturer. This is an example of defeat rather than consolidation in the global motor industry.

For Renault, perhaps this was the only way to become a global player. European firms have learned the hard way that mergers with French companies are always takeovers. Renault was an even less desirable partner than Peugeot-Citroen because the French Government still controls Renault, making any partner an outpost of the French State. That

is why Volvo shareholders threw out a merger with Renault but accepted a takeover by Ford.

Nissan has even had to accept the French way of business. Renault will take full control through a minority share stake, maximising its power for the minimum equity capital. Both debt and excess capacity plague Nissan. That immediately raises fears over the Japanese company's pioneering plant in Sunderland. For Renault, it should have no future. Logically, European production should eventually be consolidated in France.

Fortunately, Sunderland is the most efficient car plant in the UK and probably the best in Europe. It should be the conduit to transfer modern manufacturing methods to France. But don't count beyond five years.

### Carpet tax

THE Bradford & Bingley Building Society showed it was not afraid of change when it dropped Mr Bradford and Mr Bingley from its corporate identity. But the board is desperate that the B&B should remain a mutual and not surrender to carpetbaggers, and it is spending £5 million to encourage its members to agree. The principle of directors spending shareholders' money to persuade them that the board knows best is not new. Yet the re-branding exercise cost just £10 million. Clearly the B&B feels its members will take some persuading to forgo the windfalls.

## Bodycote shares fall on warning

BY PAUL ARMSTRONG

SHARES of Bodycote International fell more than 10 per cent to 890p yesterday even though the metal processing group announced a 49 per cent jump in 1998 pre-tax profits to £76.2 million.

The shares were adversely affected by the company's warning that the slowdown experienced in its Scandinavian and US operations towards the end of last year was continuing. It said that this was an indirect result of the Asian economic crisis.

Analysts said that some unrealistic earnings expectations and a bout of profit-taking were also to blame for the fall. The shares peaked at £12.82 in May 1998.

John Chesworth, chief executive, said acquisitions had provided almost two thirds of the profit increase, although organic growth levels were still strong. However, he said that Bodycote would be unable to find sufficient purchases this year to repeat that growth rate. The company spent £77 million on acquisitions last year,

the bulk of which were merged into Bodycote's heat treatment operations. The division reported an 83 per cent jump in pre-tax profit to £20.8 million.

Mr Chesworth said that although Bodycote's gearing remained less than 10 per cent, he had no intention of pursuing a share buyback. Bodycote shares would have to be half their current price to consider such a move, he said. Instead, the company would focus on capital investment as a means of generating organic growth.

Mr Chesworth said that Bodycote's ability to cut costs quickly in response to demand fluctuations had limited the impact of the Asian malaise on its margins.

Bodycote also announced that it would undertake a five-for-two share split to increase its market liquidity and reduce share price volatility. A final dividend of 7.75p was declared, making a total of 12p for the year (9.1p).

Tempos, page 28

### Telewest doubles earnings

BY RAYMOND SNOODY

TELEWEST, the UK's largest cable television supplier by number of subscribers, reported a near doubling in earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation to £146 million for 1998.

For the year, Telewest, enlarged by the purchase of General Cable and the mopping up of Birmingham Cable, increased revenues by 39.5 per cent to £539.2 million.

"The results reflect our focus on customer sales, service and marketing," said Tony Hilsley, chief executive, who joined Telewest last year from Walkers Crisps.

The emphasis on marketing at Telewest was underlined yesterday by the appointment of 32-year-old Philip Jansen as group marketing director.

The enlarged company made a pro-forma net loss of £341 million against £430 million in 1997.

Tempos, page 28

### Computer reseller 37% ahead

BY CHRIS AYRES

COMPUTACENTER, the computer reseller and services group whose shares failed to recover from the IT sector crash last summer, yesterday repaired some of the damage by reporting a 37 per cent rise in pre-tax profits for 1998 to £64.6 million.

The company, which supplies computer systems to large corporations, reported a 40 per cent rise in sales to £1.6 billion. However, net margins slipped from 4.6 per cent to 4.2 per cent.

The results saw shares in the company rise 23½p to 523½p. However, they remain well below the company's flotation price of 670p.

Computacenter will pay a maiden final dividend of 2.5p a share, up from 2p, on May 21. Philip Hulme, the Computacenter chairman, said that prospects for the group in 1999 "remained strong".

Tempos, page 28

### Kalon maintains payout despite slip

KALON GROUP, the UK paints company that is considering a £500 million bid approach by Total, the French oil company, is maintaining the total dividend for 1998 despite a fall in pre-tax profits to £37 million from £45.2 million (Martin Barrow writes).

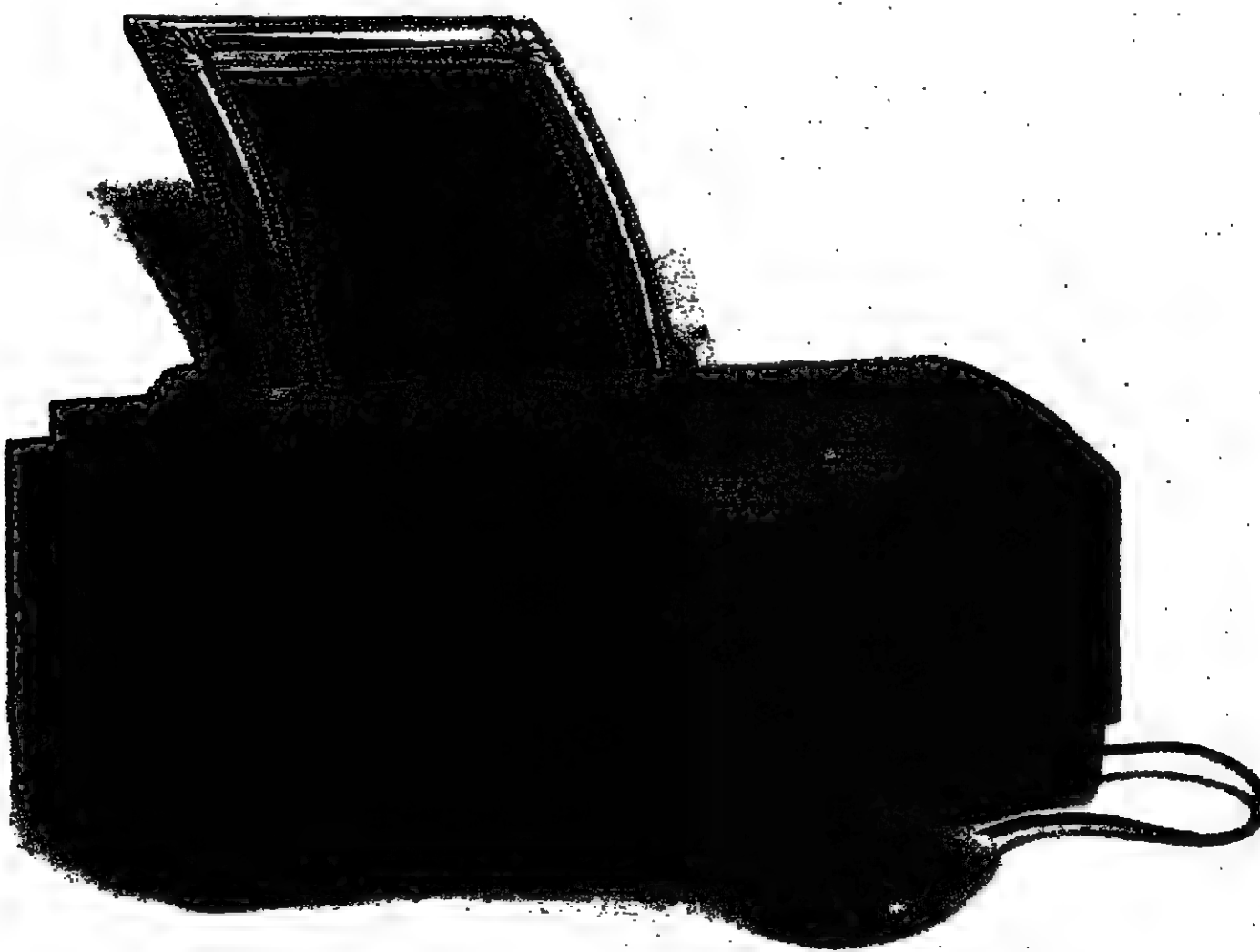
The fall was blamed on competition in the market for paints and coatings, aggravated by the strength of the pound. Turnover was little changed at

£474.3 million, compared with £472 million in 1997. The dividend stays at 6.2p.

Mike Hennessy, Kalon's managing director, said: "During the year we experienced increasingly difficult market conditions. However, we still managed to produce margins that were considerably better than those of European competitors."

Total already holds a 63 per cent interest in Kalon.

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## Developers home in on shoppers

Paul Armstrong analyses the plans for Bluewater

Developers of the £1.2 billion Bluewater project say that its location in Kent is justified by its ability to entice shoppers from far and wide. However, they have what amounts to a partial back-up plan should their forecasts of commuting customers prove a little ambitious.

The investors, led by the Australian property group Lend Lease, are in the throes of ensuring that at least 30,000 potential shoppers take up residence in the 10,000 houses they plan to build on the edge of their retailing colossus in Dartford. Lend Lease insists that its extensive, although little-talked-about, residential plan is a stand-alone project and is in no way designed to support Bluewater's economics. The forecast number of shoppers at Bluewater, it says, does not in-

clude a "single soul" from its emerging city.

This means that the nearby residents could be seen as significant icing on the cake for a complex which, according to its owners, already boasts robust economics. In fact, it could not be seen any other way.

However, Lend Lease is eyeing a much bigger prize than a few extra customers at Bluewater. The developer believes that it will "generate a few million of profit each year and rising" by developing residential, office and light industrial complexes on the land surrounding its retail display.

Lend Lease also thinks that this will go on for 50 years, creating an impressive exponential equation for its accountants to contemplate back at home.

Like the land housing Bluewater, the area earmarked for Lend Lease's long-term project is owned by Blue Circle, the cement producer, which will be eternally grateful to the Australian developer for helping it to unlock the value of its once-dormant asset. Blue Circle has agreed to a joint

venture with Lend Lease that will enable development of the 2,000 acres it holds around the shopping complex. Blue Circle contributes the land and Lend Lease provides the expertise and working capital. The pair do not plan to introduce other investors, as has been done at Bluewater.

Stuart Hornery, chairman of Lend Lease, says that the idea emerged from the company's continuing "cities of the future" research, which identified areas east of London as strategically important European regions in coming years. "We thought it was obvious, but when we asked around it was perceived by Londoners as being very brown-field," Mr Hornery said.

However, he says that this view overlooked the fact that Ebbsfleet, which is part of the Blue Circle land, has the only railway station on the planned fast link to the Channel Tunnel. Its attractiveness could be enhanced further if the link was extended to St Pancras.

Blue Circle has eight million sq ft of land around the station that has been approved for residential and retail developments, although planning is in the early stages. In the meantime, the joint venture has started building the first of 500 houses, costing £200,000 each, at the Stone Castle site immediately adjacent to Bluewater. Campus-style office parks are also planned for this area.

A third site, Crossways, will consist mainly of offices and warehouses in an attempt to capitalise on the region's perceived strategic advantage as a distribution point.

In keeping with Lend Lease practice, the buildings will be sold soon after they are leased. It is also the company's policy not to disclose its financial returns from individual projects.

"We want to see if we can create a new environment where we mix office and residential more closely," Mr Hornery said. "We know that from the middle of 1995 to 2015, 4.4 million new houses are needed in Britain and basically there is no land."

"There are few locations like this. We have big demand working for us. There is no risk attached to it at all. There might be a bit of experimental housing but the bulk of it will be stuff you will see everywhere."

Why didn't someone think of it before?

## Britain's defiant truckers haul up their flag of convenience

UK hauliers are ready to flee fuel and road tax costs by moving overseas, writes Adam Jones

Britain's truckers are contemplating life overseas. The high cost of diesel and road tax has long left them vulnerable to cheaper foreign competition and further increases announced in Gordon Brown's Budget last week have sparked a rebellion.

Backed by their trade associations — and with a sympathetic campaign in *The Sun* newspaper — trucking firms are threatening to set up businesses in other European Union countries and then "commute" back into Britain, continuing to serve their customers but denying the UK Treasury any tax benefit to offset the damage they cause to our roads and air.

The process is called "flagging out", a term more commonly applied to ships. But just how bad is the plight of the UK trucker and how serious is the threat to go overseas?

There is no doubt that fuel and road tax is much more expensive in the UK than elsewhere in the European Union. A litre of diesel costs about 71.2p in the UK. In France, it would be a about 45p. In Spain, 41p.

It is imperative that UK hauliers taking loads to France leave with a minimum of fuel so they can fill up on the other side of the Channel — and they must also fill up before returning in the hope of making a reasonable profit.

The most commonly quoted comparison for vehicle excise duty — or "tonnage tax" — is for a 40-tonne lorry with five axles, which the industry says is Europe's standard big truck.

The Budget increased the tax on this vehicle from £3,210 to £5,750 in the UK. This compares with £291 in Portugal, £338 in Luxembourg, £459 in France and £1,751 in Germany, according to the Freight Transport Association, a trade body that represents truckers.

The increases in the Budget were no surprise, however. The Labour Government had pledged to increase road fuel tax rates by an annual average of 6 per cent above the rate of inflation. This continued an "escalator" arrangement introduced by the Conservatives in 1993 at the slightly lower level of 5 per cent.

Steven Norris was the transport minister then. Bizarrely, Mr Norris, now out of office, is campaigning against the rolling fuel tax rises as head of the Road Haulage Association, another trade body.

He denies that his members are suffering at the hands of a



Hard shoulder: in the face of growing foreign competition, Eddie Stobart is threatening to register half of his 800-strong haulage fleet in Luxembourg

### SPOTTING EDDIE STOBART

FEW trends in modern business can be more baffling than the mythology that has sprung up around Eddie Stobart, the Carlisle haulage firm that was started in the 1970s (Adam Jones writes).

The company's trucks, which each bear a woman's name, have become motorway celebrities, reportedly after Jools Holland, the musician, said that he liked looking out for the lorries to relieve the boredom of being out on the road touring. The company, owned by Eddie Stobart Jr and his brother William, was overwhelmed with inquiries from other closet truck spotters. A fan club was duly formed and there are now a reputed 20,000 spotters.

One variation on the spotting game is called "Nobbies and Stobbies", where one team looks out for Eddie

Stobart lorries and another looks out for those of his French arch-enemy, Norbert Dentressangle. Eddie Stobart produces collectable toys and replica driver uniforms. There are several unofficial Internet sites, full of pictures of Stobart lorries, with names such as [lorryspotting.com](http://lorryspotting.com).

They swirl with gossip about the company, such as whether it intended to introduce "an American-style

Scania tractor unit" (this speculation was found to be true). The firm was even immortalised in a song by the Wurzels, best known for *Combine Harvester*. It had the following last verse:

"I want to be an Eddie Stobart driver. That's exactly what I want to be. And if I can't be an Eddie Stobart driver I'm going home to burn my HGV."

Mr Stobart said the latest tax rises will add £4 million to the company's costs. He added: "The transport side of our business has been getting worse and worse. It's all about survival."

He is threatening to register half of his 800-strong fleet overseas, possibly in Luxembourg. The drivers would continue to live in the UK and their trucks would also stay here most of the time, returning to their nominal headquarters six

times a year to satisfy residence regulations.

This is untested ground, though. Donald Armour, the resident flagging out expert at the Freight Transport Association, reckons the Government could move to stop this kind of arrangement.

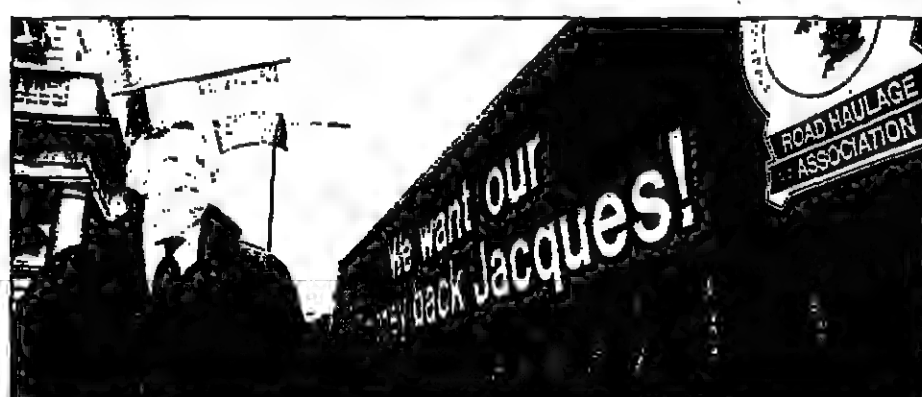
While there has been a wave of interest since the Budget, he thinks flagging out will only really be an option for the largest, who have the scale to deal with the extra legal, account-

ing, insurance and regulatory red tape overseas.

Those firms who do flag out may be tempted to hire foreign workers to replace UK-based staff. This happens in UK shipping, where owners register vessels in dependencies such as the Isle of Man so they can reduce crewing costs by not paying national insurance. About two-thirds of the bigger UK cargo and passenger ships are operated from offshore locations. In 1990, they would all have been based on the mainland.

But haulage firms have to face the fact that other workers within the European Union — who have the same rights to drive over here as British nationals — are likely to be more costly to employ and more likely to be unionised. There are further restrictions on using cheap labour from Eastern Europe.

There will be a stand-off while the industry continues to demand rebates on diesel duty. Then, who knows. The trade bodies say truckers are agitating for more direct action, such as port blockades. If it works for the French, might it not work for them?



New hat: former transport minister Steven Norris is now campaigning against fuel tax rises

## Broker who loved life

OLDER City hands will be shocked to learn of the death of Alan Harman, aged 53, once a well-known stockbroker who left the Square Mile in 1974 when Chapman & Rowe, his firm, was hammered on the Stock Exchange after failing to meet its obligations.

Harman finally settled in Spain, where he dealt in commodities. He killed himself last week in Puerto Banus, apparently unsettled by financial worries.

"He just loved life — I really don't understand," said one who knew him in the City.

Before the secondary banking crisis saw for Chapman & Rowe, Harman had a successful career trading with institutions, and the manner of his ending meant he left behind him in the City a few enemies. I am told, "I think there's a lot of jealousy involved," says his former colleague.

A COLLEAGUE dropped in on the European Commission office in London yesterday. Unearthly peace and calm, he reported, and the face of Jacques Santer still beaming down on the scene. (Shouldn't they have turned it to the wall? Oh well.)

He asked about this strange calm as the Commission entered the most turbulent few weeks of its history. "But we're thinking a lot," a senior official said enigmatically.

### Polls apart

THE Commission was the venue for the launch of a pamphlet, entitled *The Unforeseeable Consequences of Mr Gordon Brown*, which urges on the UK an immediate referendum on the single currency.

It is by Andrew Duff, director of the Federal Trust, a think-tank, and a prospective Lib-Dem MEP. He is encouraged by overnight events at the Commission, which he says are a triumph for European democracy.

OK, so we call a referendum now. What are the chances of a vote to join? Zero. Duff cheerfully admits. I see. You want a referendum which you are going to lose. Except that you know you aren't going to get one anyway. No, on second thoughts I don't see.



"Is it just me, or are policemen looking more expensive these days?"



### Eastward ho

IN 1999 a young Welsh accountant, unable to make headway in class-ridden Britain, headed off for Canada and opportunity. Yesterday Colin Parsons, chairman of Taylor Woodrow, took his final bow in the City.

Parsons came back from Canada seven years ago to sort out the mess at head office. Any differences he might have had with the old country are now forgotten.

Despite having a grown-up family in Canada, Parsons and his wife, Alice, have opted to stay in this country after retirement. "We like the people and the lifestyle, and the winters are much better than Canada," he says.

FRUSTRATED by the lack of interest in smaller companies, Brian Winterford of Winterford Securities decided to test the waters at last week's PLC Awards. There were, ostensibly, 1,500 people at the awards dinner with an interest in the subject, so he inserted an advert in the programme.

"Now, does anyone read this, I wonder," it said. "Let's find out." And readers were encouraged to provide their views on how the market in smaller companies could be revived.

"They paid a lot of money to go to the awards," says Winterford. "But I haven't had one reply."

### Blown away

A CHALLENGE to Amazon.com, the online bookshop with the ballooning share price that has yet to make a profit. The 1999 Hot-Air Challenge is organised by Global Investor Bookshop, which markets financial books on the Internet. Entrants are invited to forecast the Amazon share price at the end of next month. First prize is a balloon flight with champagne breakfast.

Runners-up will receive copies of *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds* by Charles Mackay, the definitive work on money manias from tulips and the South Sea Bubble onwards.

MARTIN WALLER  
[citydiary@the-times.co.uk](mailto:citydiary@the-times.co.uk)

## Terminal 5 decision vital

From the President and members of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Sir, It is with relief that business can finally welcome the end of the Terminal 5 public inquiry — the UK's longest ever. While it is, of course, right that each side must have its views fully aired, we cannot afford to delay a decision for much longer. We therefore urge the inspector to do all that he can to deliver his report swiftly.

The Terminal 5 decision ultimately affects Britain's global competitiveness and the benefits of a positive decision would be felt by businesses throughout the whole of the UK. Regional airports rely heavily on their links to Heathrow, which, as Europe's premier airport, can offer the huge range and frequency of flights and destinations that

### BUSINESS LETTERS

are so important to business. Furthermore, Heathrow generates £3 billion a year in wages, supports 300,000 jobs across the country and is worth nearly £5 billion each year to UK tourist revenues alone.

Other airports, such as Amsterdam Schiphol and Paris Charles de Gaulle, are being actively developed with the specific objective of taking business from Heathrow. If Britain is not to lose out to European competitors, a decision to build Terminal 5 must be made soon.

Yours faithfully,  
COLIN PARSONS, President, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry,  
ADAIR TURNER, Director General, CBI,  
BILL MORRIS, Secretary General, TGWU,  
PETER GEORGE, Chairman, Hilton International,  
JOSEPH P. MACHALE, Chief

Executive, JP Morgan Securities, GERALD CORBETT, Chief Executive, Railtrack, JIM BUCKLEY, Chief Executive, The Baltic Exchange, 33 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1AP.

From Mr Dermot Cox and Mr Nic Ferriday Sir, On Wednesday the Terminal 5 public inquiry comes to an end after nearly four years. The length of the inquiry is partly a reflection of the determination of ordinary people across London and the Thames Valley and their democratic representatives to ensure that the proposed massive expansion of Heathrow shall be rejected.

We are very optimistic that the inspector will reach this conclusion when he finishes his report in two years' time. However, there is considerable anxiety among local people

that the Government may succumb to lobbying pressure from the air transport industry to overturn an inspector's recommendation to refuse permission for Terminal 5.

We are calling on John Prescott, Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, to make a commitment now that the Government will implement the recommendations of the inquiry.

While Mr Prescott has formal discretion over the ultimate decision, he cannot understand the issues in the same depth as the inspector and will, therefore, be in no position to disregard the final judgement.

Yours faithfully,  
DERMOT COX, Chairman, Heathrow Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise, PO Box 339, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 3RB.

NIC FERRIDAY, Spokesman, Friends of the Earth.

## The Index-Tracking PEP

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# Overseas success to fuel Wolseley acquisition spree

By MATTHEW BARBOUR

WOLSELEY, the builder's merchant, is to continue its acquisition spree during the second half of the year after a buoyant US market raised first-half profits above market forecasts.

The company said that it expects the US market to remain strong, with British and French markets likely to improve. By contrast, markets were likely to remain difficult for the manufacturing division. However, the company said that overall it expects a "satisfactory" outcome for the full year.

Pre-tax profits for the six months to January 31, 1999, rose 14.2 per cent to £142.5 million (£124.8 million), 5 per cent above top-end City forecasts of £136 million.

Steve Webster, the finance director, said the results were a result of strong sales and profits in the US, which

accounts for more than half of sales, as well as a strong European performance.

"The US remains very positive. It is a strong market and there are no signs of it softening — all the recent indications on housing starts and building permits are extremely encouraging," he said.

Shares in Wolseley, which last week jumped 78p on the back of data reinforcing strong housing growth in the US and encouraging results from rival building merchant Travis Perkins, rose a further 7p yesterday to 478p. In September the shares hit a low of 276p following a steady decline from 556p before it disappointed the markets with last year's first-half results.

So far this year Wolseley has spent a record £211 million on acquisitions, including Hall & Co in Britain,

Porcher Distribution in France and four US distribution businesses for about \$68 million (£42.5 million). Mr Webster said that the company is aiming to maintain its spending rate "ad infinitum", provided it is presented with sufficient opportunities.

"We have plenty of balance-sheet capacity to take more debt," he said. Over the past 12 months net borrowing has jumped to £219.4 million from £38.1 million, with gearing rising to 21.3 per cent (4 per cent).

Sales during the first half rose 12 per cent to £2.6 billion (£2.3 billion). Earnings per share were 15.06p (15.12p), with an interim dividend of 3.75p (3.5p).

Wolseley's financial performance is detailed in its annual report, available at [www.wolseley.co.uk](http://www.wolseley.co.uk).

## Homes key for Taylor Woodrow

By ROBERT LEA

THE new chief executive of Taylor Woodrow emphasised the group's conversion into a focused Anglo-US housebuilder when he indicated yesterday that large international construction projects are becoming too risky.

Keith Egerton said: "We are clearly an international housing and property group supported by construction and trading businesses. We are more comfortable with the risk in housing and property." Mr Egerton said that turnover from the construction arm, which now accounts for just 6 per cent of profits, will decline. The new focus could also see the sale of its merchanting business, Greenham Trading, possibly for as much as £100 million.

The group yesterday revealed pre-tax profits for 1998 leaping 22 per cent to £100.3 million on the back of a 73 per cent profit rise from its booming housing operations in the US to £26 million. In the UK, Taywood Homes last year lifted operating margins to 10 per cent from 8.1 per cent. The company is paying a final dividend of 3.6p, making 5.1p for the year, up 13 per cent.



Peter Kindersley says now is an ideal time to expand curriculum-based educational material

## Education division for DK

DORLING KINDERSLEY, the multimedia publisher, is to launch a new education division and turn its website into a virtual bookshop (Raymond Snoddy writes).

Peter Kindersley, the executive chairman, unveiled the initiative yesterday as the company announced a 16.3 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £4.7 million on turnover down

4.2 per cent to £87.4 million in the six months to December 31. The interim dividend is unchanged at 15p.

Parents' fears about "a failed education system" provided the ideal environment for DK to expand curriculum-based educational material, Mr Kindersley said. The new division will bring together both electronic and paper-based

publishing and develop the concept of computer tutors.

DK is also about to relaunch its website to sell direct to customers via the Internet. The site will provide the electronic equivalent of taking a book off the shelf to browse the contents, and "virtual assistants" will know about a customer's previous purchases to make buying suggestions.

## Doulton investors to decide

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

SHAREHOLDERS and directors of Royal Doulton, the troubled china group, are to decide whether a new chief executive is to be appointed following the withdrawal from the job of Patrick Wenger, who was involved in a serious accident at the end of last year.

The company is currently being run by Hamish Grossart, the company doctor who was brought in as chairman and asked to turn the business round. He oversaw the decision last year to make more than 1,200 staff redundant.

He revealed yesterday that the group's restructuring had left it with a pre-tax loss of £42.6 million for calendar 1998, from a profit of £6.2 million a year earlier. The loss per share was 78.97p (6.92p earnings). There is no final dividend.

Mr Grossart said he will consult shareholders and directors over the next few weeks and, if asked, would run the company for the next 12 to 18 months.



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## Morgan Crucible in disposal to US

MORGAN CRUCIBLE, the diversified industrial company, expects to raise £136.8 million from the sale of its maintenance, repair and overhaul business to America's Illinois Tool Works, announced yesterday. The company also said it would seek authority to buy back up to 14.99 per cent of its shares.

Morgan Crucible shares rose 12p to 259p, helped by the company's statement that its 1998 profits would be towards the higher end of the range indicated in January's profits warning. Shareholders were told that profits before tax and exceptional items would be between 15 per cent and 20 per cent below those of the previous year. However, the company cautioned that proceeds from the sale of assets would not be sufficient to cover goodwill previously written off, and that the results would show an exceptional charge of £57 million as a result.

## Britax ahead 15%

BRITAX INTERNATIONAL, the automotive engineering and aircraft interiors company, lifted underlying pre-tax profits 15.2 per cent to £52.3 million in 1998. Adjusted earnings per share rose 15.3 per cent to 10.25p. Britax also raised £48.4 million after tax from the disposal of its two leasing businesses. The total dividend rises 7.5 per cent to 4.19p, with a second interim dividend of 3.278p. Britax said it had identified a number of targeted bolt-on acquisitions that could be funded through strong cash generation.

## Brammer blow

PROFITS at Brammer, the industrial services group, fell to £23.9 million before tax from £30.5 million in 1998. This reflected a disappointing performance in the UK, where business was adversely affected by the impact of the strong pound on exporting and manufacturing companies that make use of Brammer's services. Earnings per share fell to 35.2p from 45.8p. However, the total dividend rises to 17.8p from 17.2p, with a final 11.8p. Brammer said the outlook was still uncertain for UK businesses although there were signs that the rate of decline may be easing.

## Headlam's Eclipse bid

HEADLAM GROUP, the floorcoverings and fabrics distributor, has launched a recommended £52.4 million takeover bid for Eclipse Blinds. The offer, which has received acceptances in respect of 29 per cent of Eclipse, is of 20 new Headlam shares for 61 Eclipse shares, valuing each Eclipse share at 113.6p, against Monday's closing price of 97p. Headlam also reported a rise in 1998 pre-tax profits to £22.9 million from £18.1 million. Eclipse reported annual pre-tax profits little changed at £6.52 million, compared with £6.3 million in 1997.

## Slow start for Finlay

JAMES FINLAY, the plantations and specialty teas company, said it had made a disappointing start to 1999, with relatively weak tea prices. However, dry weather in Kenya, North India and Bangladesh suggested that prices would improve this year as a result of a reduction in crops. The company was reporting a rise in 1998 pre-tax profits to £16.2 million from £13.9 million, with a rise in earnings per share to 10.8p from 10.2p. The total dividend is increased to 5p from 4.15p, with a second interim dividend of 3p.

## Cortecs £1m charge

CORTECS, the troubled biotechnology company whose chairman is Lord Patten, will take a second-half charge of £1 million to cover the cost of streamlining its activities after the disclosure last December that two of its three lead drugs programmes had failed to make adequate progress. Yesterday the company reported an increase in first-half losses to £11.5 million from £9.1 million. The loss per share was 7.2p, compared with a 5.9p loss last time. The shares, which peaked at 418p in 1996, traded at 24p yesterday.

## Prestbury in the black

PRESTBURY GROUP, the property investment company, where Nick Leslau is chairman and chief executive, returned to profit in 1998, earning £3.7 million before tax compared with a loss of £800,000 in 1997. Earnings were 0.08p a share, against a 0.3p loss in the previous year. There is again no dividend but the company has promised a "modest" dividend for 1999. Net asset value was 2.75p a share at the year end, up from 1.38p at the end of 1997. Yesterday the shares, which traded on the Alternative Investment Market, were unchanged at 34p.

## Secure Trust up 7%

SECURE TRUST, the private banking group, lifted pre-tax profits 7 per cent to £11.4 million in 1998, with a 5 per cent rise in earnings to 52.3p a share. The total dividend rises 57 per cent to 36p a share, with a 10p special dividend paid in November, and a final dividend of 18p. The shares rose 17p to 580p yesterday. The company's two divisions comprise Arbutnot Latham, the private and merchant bank, and Secure Trust Bank, a provider of household cash management services.

مكتبة من الكتب







**TRADING PERIOD:** Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

**TRADING PERIOD:** Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

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1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050	2051	2052	2053	2054	2055	2056	2057	2058	2059	2060	2061	2062	2063	2064	2065	2066	2067	2068	2069	2070	2071	2072	2073	2074	2075	2076	2077	2078	2079	2080	2081	2082	2083	2084	2085	2086	2087	2088	2089	2090	2091	2092	2093	2094	2095	2096	2097	2098	2099	2100	2101	2102	2103	2104	2105	2106	2107	2108	2109	2110	2111	2112	2113	2114	2115	2116	2117	2118	2119	2120	2121	2122	2123	2124	2125	2126	2127	2128	2129	2130	2131	2132	2133	2134	2135	2136	2137	2138	2139	2140	2141	2142	2143	2144	2145	2146	2147	2148	2149	2150	2151	2152	2153	2154	2155	2156	2157	2158	2159	2160	2161	2162	2163	2164	2165	2166	2167	2168	2169	2170	2171	2172	2173	2174	2175	2176	2177	2178	2179	2180	2181	2182	2183	2184	2185	2186	2187	2188	2189	2190	2191	2192	2193	2194	2195	2196	2197	2198	2199	2200	2201	2202	2203	2204	2205	2206	2207	2208	2209	2210	2211	2212	2213	2214	2215	2216	2217	2218	2219	2220	2221	2222	2223	2224	2225	2226	2227	2228	2229	2230	2231	2232	2233	2234	2235	2236	2237	2238	2239	2240	2241	2242	2243	2244	2245	2246	2247	2248	2249	2250	2251	2252	2253	2254	2255	2256	2257	2258	2259	2260	2261	2262	2263	2264	2265	2266	2267	2268	2269	2270	2271	2272	2273	2274	2275	2276	2277	2278	2279	2280	2281	2282	2283	2284	2285	2286	2287	2288	2289	2290	2291	2292	2293	2294	2295	2296	2297	2298	2299	2300	2301	2302	2303	2304	2305	2306	2307	2308	2309	2310	2311	2312	2313	2314	2315	2316	2317	2318	2319	2320	2321	2322	2323	2324	2325	2326	2327	2328	2329	2330	2331	2332	2333	2334	2335	2336	2337	2338	2339	2340	2341	2342	2343	2344	2345	2346	2347	2348	2349	2350	2351	2352	2353	2354	2355	2356	2357	2358	2359	2360	2361	2362	2363	2364	2365	2366	2367	2368	2369	2370	2371	2372	2373	2374	2375	2376	2377	2378	2379	2380	2381	2382	2383	2384	2385	2386	2387	2388	2389	2390	2391	2392	2393	2394	2395	2396	2397	2398	2399	2400	2401	2402	2403	2404	2405	2406	2407	2408	2409	2410	2411	2412	2413	2414	2415	2416	2417	2418	2419	2420	2421	2422	2423	2424	2425	2426	2427
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1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																										

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RETAILERS' GENERAL				ALTERNATIVE INV. MARKET			
200 A & S Grocery	245	+	12.1	191 74-10 Day			
201 Alcott	220	+	11.9	192 44-44 Symbol	91%		
202 Alcott	220	+	11.9	193 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
203 Alcott	220	+	11.9	194 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
204 Alcott	220	+	11.9	195 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
205 Alcott	220	+	11.9	196 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
206 Alcott	220	+	11.9	197 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
207 Alcott	220	+	11.9	198 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
208 Alcott	220	+	11.9	199 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
209 Alcott	220	+	11.9	200 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
210 Alcott	220	+	11.9	201 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
211 Alcott	220	+	11.9	202 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
212 Alcott	220	+	11.9	203 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
213 Alcott	220	+	11.9	204 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
214 Alcott	220	+	11.9	205 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
215 Alcott	220	+	11.9	206 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
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217 Alcott	220	+	11.9	208 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
218 Alcott	220	+	11.9	209 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
219 Alcott	220	+	11.9	210 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
220 Alcott	220	+	11.9	211 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
221 Alcott	220	+	11.9	212 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
222 Alcott	220	+	11.9	213 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
223 Alcott	220	+	11.9	214 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
224 Alcott	220	+	11.9	215 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
225 Alcott	220	+	11.9	216 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
226 Alcott	220	+	11.9	217 44-44 Symbol	91%	5	23.8
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1973 Japan's New Year	184	3.9	
1978 Japan's New Year	643	1.0	
1980's Korea's End	783		
88 Korea's End	2074	0.8	
1980's Law Enforcement	1734	2	3.3 30.9

346	Wesley St.	434' ± 1	2.5	725	290' Hill End	647
234	Murray St.	352' ± 10'	2.1 44.4	297'	152' Haynes Pub	165
57	Murray Veterans	7: 62	4.0	18	7' Highbury Hse	17

136.52	Time: 24.230	112.3812	+0.1700	7.12	4.74	INDEX
115.44	Time: 10% 2307	129.7621	+0.1650	8.23	4.89	
110.80	Time: 11.4.2307-24	112.28171	+0.0353	10.24	5.01	
98.17	Time: 2.5.1999-24	96.6270	-0.0737	7.82	4.15	
116.61	Time: 2.5.1999-24	96.6270	-0.0737	7.82	4.15	

790	301	Helping Op	732	-39	0.3	51.5	208	190
339 1/2	148 1/2	Wacht Cred	339 1/2	...	2.1	25.2	250 1/2	157
32 1/2	20	Intercapital	32	...	...	...	...	...
277 1/2	145	Investment Co	257 1/2	...	2.3	13.9	...	...
177 1/2	59 1/2	Jardine Stnd	191	+14	8.0	6.2	...	...

[illegible]

on projected inflation of:	5%	3%
Year 11, 7% 2001	20297549	-0.035
	2.99	3.01

207	159-	2 <sup>+</sup>	3.1	18.1
208	227+	4	3.4	18.1

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47	34: Star Energy	212
65	10: Sacka Petroleum	7+ 2
94	45: Southern Vests	47
89	54: Sports & Del Media	83

امكن من الرأى



From Beijing to Tokyo and Dublin to New York, St Patrick's Day celebrations circle the world, says Eve-Ann Prentice

# The green party wins worldwide

**E**ddie Jordan, the Irish stalwart and Formula One champion, will be living proof today of the Guinness adage that not everything in black and white makes sense.

While his compatriots do their strenuous best to celebrate St Patrick's Day in the time-honoured fashion, donning more than a million pints of the black stuff by closing time in the UK alone, Jordan will be putting his foot down hard — on a bicycle pedal.

For some, the image may conjure Guinness's advert portraying a fish on a bicycle.

The motor racing supremo will push himself to the limit at the start of a 250-mile sponsored cycle ride from Petra in Jordan to Eilat in Israel to raise funds for a children's cancer charity.

Just over a week after seeing his driver, Heinz-Harald Frentzen, sprayed with champagne for coming second in the opening Grand Prix of the season in Australia, Jordan is spending St Patrick's Day as possibly the driest Irishman on the planet.

But even if Jordan does not manage a pint of Guinness today, revelers in Britain and around the world will be raising a glass to honor Ireland's patron saint (who never tasted a drop in his lifetime). A cool 45 pints of the stuff will be served every second that the UK's 72,000 bars are open today and one in six of the bars will hold a St Patrick's Day party.

In Ireland and America, St Patrick's Day revelers have been getting in the party mood since the weekend. On Saturday the Chicago River began turning even greener

than usual as city workers dumped vegetable dye from the stern of a power boat, while Ireland began ushering in the year 2000 with a dazzling fireworks display watched by more than 100,000 people.

One of the largest crowds yet seen on the streets of Dublin gathered on the banks of the Liffey for the glittering street party, kicking off St Patrick's Day celebrations and nine months of festivities leading to the millennium. It is the first official event in the world to herald the year 2000.

Jim McDaid, Ireland's Minister for Tourism, Sport and Recreation, says: "Tonight is the night that we show the world that the Irish know how to celebrate."

The national airline Aer Lingus spent £400,000 sponsoring the show, touted as the biggest pyrotechnics display yet staged in Europe.

It was orchestrated by Syd Howard, a 63-year-old Australian and the man behind the fireworks displays which accompanied the handover of Hong Kong and the end of the Atlanta Olympics. About 6.5 tonnes of explosives — 15,000 shells — were shipped in for the show and stored in an Irish Army

base for two weeks beforehand. The spectacle around the majestic Customs House brought the curtain up on five days of revelry across Ireland leading up to the biggest St Patrick's Day celebrations on the island to date.

More bizarre Irish crazes will take place in Beijing, where the

The Mount Everest Brewery has been licensed to brew Guinness in Nepal

— it will be a high point of the day

first St Patrick's Day street party is being held, and in Tokyo, which is hosting a parade to rival the megafestivals in New York and Australia. One place where drinkers are sure to be high is Nepal, where the Mount Everest Brewery has been licensed to brew Guinness and distribute it to Kathmandu's 130 bars

for sale at a heart-warming 55p a bottle.

And the man behind all these revellers? It is hard to separate historical fact from legend in the minds and hearts of the Irish, but one thing is certain — St Patrick did not come from Ireland. He was born to a Romano-British town councillor, probably in Wales or what is now western England, in about 390.

At 16, he was captured by Irish pirates and enslaved by them for six years. After escaping or being freed, he was ordained a bishop and returned to Ireland as a missionary. Intent on eradicating paganism, idolatry and sun-worship (hard though the latter may be to imagine in an island renowned for rain), St Patrick built permanent foundations for the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland.

The Patrick of legend, meanwhile, was a mystical wizard-like being who drove all the serpents out of Ireland and who managed to explain the mysteries of the Holy Trinity with the three-leafed shamrock.

Eddie Jordan's venture in the saddle comes after he swapped life in the fast lane for a ride on the wagon — he has given up alcohol for Lent

following a challenge from his daughter, Miki, 15. Nonetheless, with Irish eyes shining with enthusiasm for St Patrick's Day, he says: "Anyone who has the stupidity to go off drink for Lent knows that you are allowed to get lashed on St Pat's Day."

There is certainly one St Patrick's Day which he will never forget. In 1991 his team was to race in its first Formula One event in Phoenix, Arizona, on March 17. Shortly beforehand, when the expensive and high-powered world of motor racing had spent a fortune arranging to be there, "the city's mayor announced that the big race would have to be held a week early because the roads were being painted green for St Patrick's Day."

Politicians are rarely confused with saints, but the strain of keeping the Irish peace process on course needs the patience of one. Tonight, Bertie Aherne, the Taoiseach, will find a little light relief from the cares of office when he presents Bill Clinton with a basket of shamrock after holding talks in Washington with the other Irish leaders and the American President.

In New York, meanwhile, there was one discordant note in the world's St Patrick's Day festivities when six protesters were arrested during the first Bronx St Patrick's Day Parade in 70 years, for trying to join the procession under the banner of a gay rights group. Police said the protesters displayed a banner that read "Lavender and Green Alliance," and rushed on to the street to join the parade a few minutes after it started.



A Little Mr Leprechaun contestant at a St Patrick's Day festival

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## GALLERIES

It's a nuclear missile site, but is it art?

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# THE ARTS

## MUSIC

Premiere 70th birthday bow at the Barbican

PAGE 36



What does it take to get children into the theatre? Daniel Rosenthal on gloomy new research

## Give us Ross and Roald

When it is published tomorrow, new research into what 10 to 14-year-olds think about live drama will be eagerly scrutinised by all those theatre managers and artistic directors who talk of the pressing need to build "the audience of tomorrow". They are in for a sobering read.

Asked to name a leisure activity they pursue at weekends or during school holidays, every child in the survey mentioned cinema, but fewer than one in a hundred mentioned theatre. The survey, by the market research company Kids Connection, found that most children find theatres "stuffy and unfriendly", and resent having to sit in "uncomfortable seats far from the stage". They believe tickets are overpriced, and should cost the same as a seat at their local Odeon. The refreshment on offer is another turn-off, and one that managers should not underestimate: in an earlier survey for UCI Cinemas, Kids Connection discovered that

more than a third of under-16s went to the movies for popcorn, ice-cream and soft drinks first, and the film second.

At least these perceived deficiencies are essentially cosmetic and, particularly where food and seat prices are concerned, treatable. For example, Sheffield Theatres' current "How Much?" initiative (underwritten by the Arts Council's New Audiences scheme) has been offering tickets to 16-24s for £3.50, prompting 12,000 young people to visit the Lyceum, Crucible and Studio theatres in the last quarter of 1998.

More disheartening — because they are much harder to

counter — are the children's overwhelmingly negative opinions of what they have seen on stage, and of the fundamental nature of theatre as an art form. With their experience confined almost exclusively to pantomimes and touring West End musicals, the majority of children feel disappointed on three counts: there is a dearth of age-appropriate material, no peer-group kudos in attending, and they simply do not believe the on-stage action. Shows were either "babyish" or "too serious", with nothing to say about the way these children live their lives.

"These children feel that tele-

vision gives them real life, and cinema gives them fantasy, but they find it very difficult to suspend disbelief in the theatre," says Peervyl Murray, the managing director of Kids Connection. "A lot of them find scene changes obtrusive, and they couldn't get their minds around the fact that characters can't actually go outside on stage." Only a handful of those questioned had ever been carried away by the immediacy of live drama.

Had the researchers gone to regions with minimal local theatre provision, and chosen children from families unable to afford even an occasional visit, their findings might seem unrepresentative. Yet Kids Connection interviewed 164 children from middle and working-class families at two state schools with what Murray calls "theatre-going reputations", one in Birmingham and one in Norwich — both cities which offer a good range of drama. "I really did think we'd get more positive responses," says Murray.

She will present the survey in London tomorrow at "Older Younger", a one-day seminar on the future of theatre for young people and the family. The research was funded by the Arts Council and Sainsbury's, and Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover will use the seminar to launch an initiative for the commissioning and professional production of new work for young people.

Discussion panels at the event will feature directors with impressive track records in the youth market, including John Retallack, whose exhilarating stage adaptation of *Junk*, Melvin Burgess's contro-

versial novel about teenage heroin addicts, won last year's Barclays Theatre Award for best young people's show and is currently on its second tour.

The survey, suggests Retallack, is a wake-up call for the industry. "At the moment, it's as though children this age are a huge 'disabled' group who from time to time we have to acknowledge," he says. "They lack money, so if you cater just for them you will struggle economically. They lack years, so you cannot choose to put on the kind of adult work that most directors want to stage."

"Theatre companies who work exclusively for young people make the best of their resources, but this research tells me that the real initiative has to come from the big national and regional venues. They have to take a much longer-term approach."

So what putative productions might persuade children to spend their pocket money on theatre rather than movies or video games? The survey found that what this crowd really, really wants is soap stars and adaptations of books by authors like Terry Pratchett, Judy Blume, Robert Swindells and Roald Dahl. Based on the survey, any producer in search of the ultimate teen hit should opt for *East-Enders* Ross Kemp in anything by Dahl or, better still, *South Park* — *The Stage Show*. "A new play, by an author they didn't know, would have to be phenomenally good for them to be interested," says Murray.

Retallack disagrees. "I know of at least five really terrific, unproduced new plays for this age group circulating at the moment, but 90 per cent of theatres won't touch them because they don't fit into a recognised category. If they were aggressively marketed they could succeed. Young people think they know what they want — but you can surprise them."

*Junk* is on tour in England and Scotland until June 12 (for details call 01865 884240)



A scene from *Junk*, adapted by John Retallack, who dubs the new survey a "wake-up call"

## GREAT BRITISH HOPES

### Rising stars in the arts firmament

CHARLOTTE BROOM

Profession: Principal dancer with Northern Ballet Theatre. Age: 27.

What is her style? The company's artistic director, Christopher Gable, considered her to have a remarkable ability to identify with roles. "I particularly enjoy dramatic parts as opposed to just technical ones," she says. "I feel I can get much deeper in a performance with a character." This makes her especially suited to NBT's theatrical style.

What's new? From tonight she can be seen at Sadler's Wells as Lucy in the Christopher Gable-Michael Pink *Dracula*. And she takes the ti-

tle role in NBT's new modern-dress *Carmen*, premiered in Leeds last month and now in the touring repertoire.

How did she prepare for *Carmen*? She read Prosper Mérimée's novella and has seen several productions of the opera. "But ultimately it was up to me to find my own characterisation of Carmen, not copy someone else's." So who is her Carmen? "She is someone who doesn't think of the consequences of her actions. She just thinks of the moment."

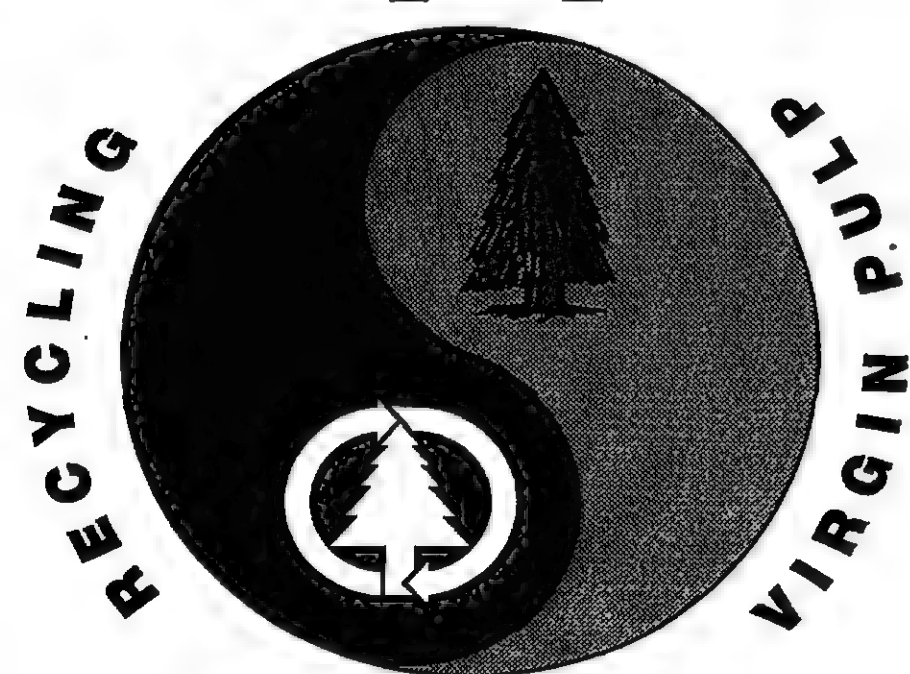
How does she cope with all that touring? It feels like a doddle after her first job. "I joined a small compa-



NADINE MEISNER

Charlotte Broom's record label (Great British Hopes, last week) is Nimbus, not Chandos

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## Epitaph for a wicked world

Trevor Nunn's production of *Troilus and Cressida* displays his usual respect for Shakespeare's text, up to but excluding the ending. After the Greeks in their plumed helmets have batted with the Trojans in their oriental robes, he gives us a last, spurious glimpse of Cressida. She stands alone onstage, rejected by a contemptuous Troilus and even by her uncle Pandarus, a pathetic, broken sex object, lipstick smeared over her lower face. And gunfire splutters offstage, by way of suggesting that the play is for all seasons, not least our own.

And so it is. *Troilus* marks the debut of the sub-company that Nunn has formed at the National, and it will, I'm sure, do stronger work when its members know each other better. But you cannot leave even an unevenly acted production without seeing why the play has been revived twice by the RSC in the past three years, is now in the Olivier rep, and may get yet another showing in the West End this autumn. There is a piece that better embodies the disillusioned soul of the departing century? "Nothing but wars and lechery," repeats the arch-cynic Thersites, and, yes, that is what our era's dictators and scientists have left us feeling about honour, chivalry and love.

Does Nunn mean to convey some specific anxiety by setting white Greeks against Trojans who, with the illogical exception of David Bamber's



Pandarus, are all black? If so, that seems more dubious, for Shakespeare makes it clear (witness Hector's refusal to fight with his cousin Ajax) that both sides belong to one big, brawling family. Moreover, isn't it odd that a theatre

which has often and effectively asked us to blind our imaginations to its actors' colour should suddenly expect us to make a point of noticing it?

That's not to say there are no differences between Shakespeare's Trojans and his Greeks. As Nunn suggests with *Arabian Nights* costumes, exotic cushions and flaming tripods, the home side is the more romantic. The grimy-faced visitors in their battered leather greatcoats are

the more practical and realistic. It is not surprising that Cressida betrays Troilus with Greek Diomed, or that Achilles murders Hector, in this production in a brutally opportunistic way. That's how a wicked world wags.

Though the battle scenes are almost too carefully drilled, Nunn achieves some fine visual effects on the gravel circle, backed by a timber wall, that serves for a set. But I have seen nearly every role better played. The main exception is Roger Allam's Ulysses, who is incisive, sly, articulate and so embittered by the war that the very word "Troy" is a furious sneer. Denis Quilley gives emotional reality to Nestor, usually a senile doddler; Bamber's Pandarus mimics and winces to splendidly voyeuristic effect; and Peter de Jersey makes a passionate Troilus.

But others struggle, among them Jasper Britton's Thersites, whose facial sores are angrier than his innards; Dholi Oparel, whose Hector seems oddly precious; and Sophie Okonedo, who works too hard to motivate Cressida. I liked the idea of a loose-limbed extrovert who ventures way out of her emotional depth, and morally destroys herself in order physically to survive; but there is too much signalling of feeling, too much verbal strain, too many words that come in italics or, I fear, capitals.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



Shakespeare under strain: Jasper Britton (top), Peter de Jersey, Sophie Okonedo and David Bamber at the NT

### Loyalist's loyalty ends at home

Trust Ambassadors

very stillness signals danger and his savage outbursts of anger are roared from a great gape of a mouth.

His 15-year-old son is a disappointment on several grounds, shy and prone to headaches, but Geordie is not beyond extending a fond tolerance to the lad's awkward endeavours to head for manhood. The scene in the club where Geordie and his sidekick Arty (Colum Conway) edu-

cate the boy in social skills provides a comic interlude in the gathering menace.

Conflicts develop with intermediaries in the big deal but even more crucially between Geordie and his wife, Margaret, and although the significance of their dispute is not immediately clear, and at times hard to follow, what Mitchell achieves is the creation of a woman steadily becoming certain that defence of her son is vastly more important to her than any other loyalty. Laine Megaw's subtle performance takes us from her loyalist loyalty — where she sparks our initial surprise at her practised handling of a suspect — to the climactic catastrophe.

Megaw's tight, half-smiling features can break into a wrath as unnerving as her man's, and tighten again into a bridge-burning resolve after showing us, through tone of voice and twist of shoulders, how the casebook of her life has altered.

Powerful direction by Mick Gordon and not an orange sash on view.

JEREMY KINGSTON

مكتبة من الكتب



# Funny peculiar, funny ha ha

**VISUAL ART:** As a new book sheds light on Gilbert and George, Rachel Campbell-Johnston pays them a call

Ring on the doorbell and listen for the footsteps — two sets measuring the boards. Then the door swings open on to London's living artworks, on to two tweed suits and two extended hands and four burnished brogues planted evenly on the floor. Clearly I am looking at one of Gilbert and George's most polished pieces: their "Interview sculpture".

What is it about matching people that unnerves? I flutter nervously under the imperceptible double gaze. "Coffee?" suggests George. "It's only instant," adds Gilbert. "Sugar?" asks George. Gilbert pours milk. Their manners are formidable. Inside the polished passageways of a Dickensian home, done out in high Victorian style with Puginesque furnishings and leather-bound books, there are no traces of the artists' own works — nothing of the disturbing, defecatory subject-matter that has so shocked or outraged or delighted the critics. But now a biographical portrait completed just before his death last year by the writer Daniel Farson, their longstanding fan and drinking companion, has cast some light on the enigmatic artists.

The long, chill studio space into which I am led is perfectly bare. "We are very organised," George informs me. "Very organised indeed." The contrast is startling between the men standing stiffly before me — the taller George, bespectacled and well spoken, with a silver pen in the top pocket of his immaculately tailored suit; the shorter Gilbert, with a soulful brown gaze, an Italian accent and a comb in the top pocket of his immaculately tailored suit — and the works which they first met at St Martin's art school some 30 years ago. What could pieces with titles like *Sperm Eaters* or *Spit on Shit* have to do with this fastidious duo?

The artists gleefully agree. "We had a friend who was poorly in hospital," Gilbert tells me. "We sent him a card. One of our own: *Spunk and Tears*. He put it on his bedside table and the nurses loved it. And when we went to visit our friend they were all very charming." But after we had left, George goes on, "they said they couldn't believe that we were the artists of the card. 'Not those respectable men!' they cried."



The end of the pier show: George and Gilbert ("our motto is that nothing matters") take a break from the serious business of producing art to sniff the sea air in Brighton

The respectable pair collapse into churning laughter.

The laughter connects the artists to their work. I had assumed they would be grave, as unsmiling as their portraits. I was wrong. In their studio Gilbert and George pull out plans of their new work. They have spent the last few months riffling through a copy of the London A-Z, picking out all the places with unfortunate names: Spankers Hill Wood, Spert Street, Swallow Street, Organ Lane. They laugh uncontrollably at

the double entendres. Excitedly they rifle through contact prints of urine photographed under a microscope. "Piss 1-100" the box is labelled. "Aren't they beautiful?" Gilbert cries, admiring crystalline patterns. "Our paintings make people look at piss for the first time and see that it is beautiful," explains Gilbert. "Beauty has an amazing power," George declares.

They show me pictures of themselves, naked, or with trousers round their ankles, or bending over,

buttocks played. "Of course we feel vulnerable when we hang them in a gallery," says George. "But people find their own vulnerability in our art as well. Our art is about emotion. We are creating the visual language of suffering, or awkwardness, or ecstasy. And we are more frank about our art than any other artist."

And yet, if, as they profess, their art is their life, they are contradicting themselves. They cover their privacy. No one is ever allowed into their bedroom. Gilbert's former

marriage is airbrushed out of their biography. "We aren't prepared to provide a list of all the people we have ever shagged. We don't think that's helpful," George closes the conversation firmly.

But perhaps this hiatus is the most interesting aspect of their art, articulating the paradoxical and painful dissonance of the human state, as at one moment we put on our public face, the next crouch trousers on a lavatory pan.

And perhaps this is the "consola-

tion" which Gilbert and George offer those who go to see their art: that the higher up the tree of life we climb, the better the gaping masses below can see our bottoms. Nothing can matter too much when you remember that.

"No. Nothing matters. Our motto is that nothing matters," Gilbert says. "Nothing matters, nothing matters," Gilbert agrees.

● Gilbert and George: A Portrait by Daniel Farson is published by HarperCollins this week, price £19.99

## AROUND THE GALLERIES

SOME artists almost choose to make themselves outsiders. When Peter Samuelson was rediscovered he was living in deepest Oxfordshire, supporting himself by restoring oriental carpets and lending a hand on a nearby farm. Bizarre, one might think, for an artist of such evident talent and approachability.

After training in Paris and living during the war years in The Netherlands, he returned to England and disappeared from the art world, running a lodging house in Earls Court instead. But he always painted and drew: a lot of handsome young men drifted in and out of his lodging house, and he developed his own meticulously realistic style of portraiture.

Finally he stopped painting altogether, and took it up again only with the stimulus of outside interest in his art, when he was in his early seventies. This no doubt explains why this first cull from the attic full of paintings he left at his death makes its appearance in the Cotswolds, where he spent his last years. The style (not to mention the subject-matter) is no doubt easier to appreciate now, post-Hockney, than it would have been in the Fifties, in particular Samuelson's exquisite draughtsmanship and his subtle and delicate colouring.

Brian Sinfield Gallery, 150 High St, Burford, Oxfordshire OX10 3JG, daily 10am-5.30pm, until March 27

□ Liam Hanley is by no means an outsider, but he seems to keep himself sedulously upon the fringes, as though his art is somehow too private to be launched on the great indiscriminate merry-go-round of the West End art world — it has an air of keeping its secrets. Hanley paints with single-minded dedication, his work mostly on that elusive borderline between representation and abstraction.

A few years ago he became obsessed with the patterns made by ploughed fields: in this new show his focus seems to have shifted to the sea coast. Most of these small pictures find rough squares and cubes even in the sea itself, though they avoid excessive rigidity through the occasional intervention of curling winds and waves. The colouring this time is also more vibrant.

Beardmore Gallery, 23-24 Prince of Wales Road, NW5 0PL-45 0923, Tues-Fri 10am-6pm, Sat noon-6pm, until March 31

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

## Richard Cork on an eerie video installation about the Greenham missile base

Once a well-publicised target for women campaigning against the nightmare of nuclear annihilation, Greenham Common has now lapsed into disuse. The US military's English base served as an arsenal for cruise missiles, and Greenham became a symbol of apocalyptic menace, its placid rural setting only throwing into relief the horrifying prospect of a planet laid waste by irreversible conflagration.

Jane and Louise Wilson are young enough never to have witnessed Greenham's former notoriety. But they insist, in their haunting exhibition at the Lisson Gallery, on bringing the dormant base back to an eerie semblance of life. By calling their video projection *Gamma* the Wilson twins imply that Greenham's radioactive past is not forgotten. And in order to show how disquieting the abandoned buildings remain, the two artists take us on a journey to the heart of places where missiles used to lie in permanent expectation.

Even as we enter the gallery, amplified sounds of rising and descending lifts, the ominous hum emitted by machines and the snapping-shut of mighty metal doors assail our ears. Once inside, we find large screens positioned on opposite walls. Anyone wanting a comprehensive viewing is obliged to stand between them, and turn continually from one set of images to the other. Even here, though, it is impossible to catch everything.

The perpetual swivelling makes us disoriented and incapable of absorbing all the sensations competing for our attention. The sense of bewilderment generated is surely

## You thought the Cold War was finished?

akin to the Wilsons' own reaction when they penetrated the arsenal for the first time.

They must have felt that only fragments of Greenham's former reality lingered there. In this respect they operate like detectives struggling to assess evidence at a locale long since abandoned. Their cameras change speed in response to the scenes in front of the lens. When scrutinising an enormous hangar-like structure, they slow down. This desolate space seems frozen in a state of suspense.

Although its personnel and equipment have long departed, the suggestion that they may return hangs in the air. The Wilsons' willingness to remain there appears motivated by the suspicion that something may happen. But before long the camera starts to travel briskly down narrow concrete passageways, claustrophobic and redolent of secrecy.

No sooner have we become accustomed to a fast pace than it slows once again, gingerly moving towards a door into a bare room. Two blue plastic chairs sit there, as if recently vacated. The sound of ticking adds to the unease, a mood heightened when we find ourselves confronted by a close-up of an official form headed "Soviet Inspection". The words may well refer to the Greenham base's current status, defunct and yet subject to an INF treaty that permits scrutiny by Russian military at any time until 2001. No sign of such a visit can be detected in *Gamma*.

But sometimes the Wilsons compound the mystery by registering an unexplained human presence. At one point, after travelling very fast over arrows set into the floor, the camera settles on a flashing control panel. An instruction issues an urgent warning: "Do Not Touch Unless Directed By The Launch Centre." But an enigmatic finger seems to flout the order by pressing a button, and soon stockinged legs strut across a mirrored floor whose reflections add to the perceptual confusion. More figures appear out-

side, hooded this time and moving along the top of grimy walls at night. They look like soldiers on patrol, but we are not allowed to look at them properly before *Gamma* sets off on another expedition. We descend to the bowels of the building and a space lined with containers. The strange sector of the base is located down here, in a chamber where long plastic strips dangle from the ceiling. They partially hide a cartoon-style image of a snarling, running dog newly freed from a broken neck-chain. This graffiti-like hound takes on a powerful force. It resembles the canine equivalent of a cruise missile, released from its moorings in order to pulverise the enemy.



Shadows of doom: *Mirrored Figure* from *Gamma* by Jane and Louise Wilson

By focusing on the quiescent objects still lurking in the Greenham gloom, the Wilsons succeed in reactivating its past. They scrutinise the Decontamination Chamber, and track past a sequence of directional arrows that might have strayed from a Francis Bacon painting. Indeed, many of the bleak spaces investigated by *Gamma*'s camera are reminiscent of the rooms where Bacon's figures assert their convulsive presence. The Wilsons, who admire his work, must realise that it cannot be disentangled from the existential anxiety of the Cold War era.

Nor can Greenham, despite the waning of hostility between the superpowers. Wherever we are taken in the building, its echoing emptiness fails to offer reassurance. However irrefutable the closure of the base may be, its redundant interior still seems freighted with worrying memories. The dangers and fears that brought this arsenal into existence will never entirely go away. They remain in an arrested state, just as the Wilsons themselves appeared in an earlier video sitting side by side in a hypnotic trance.

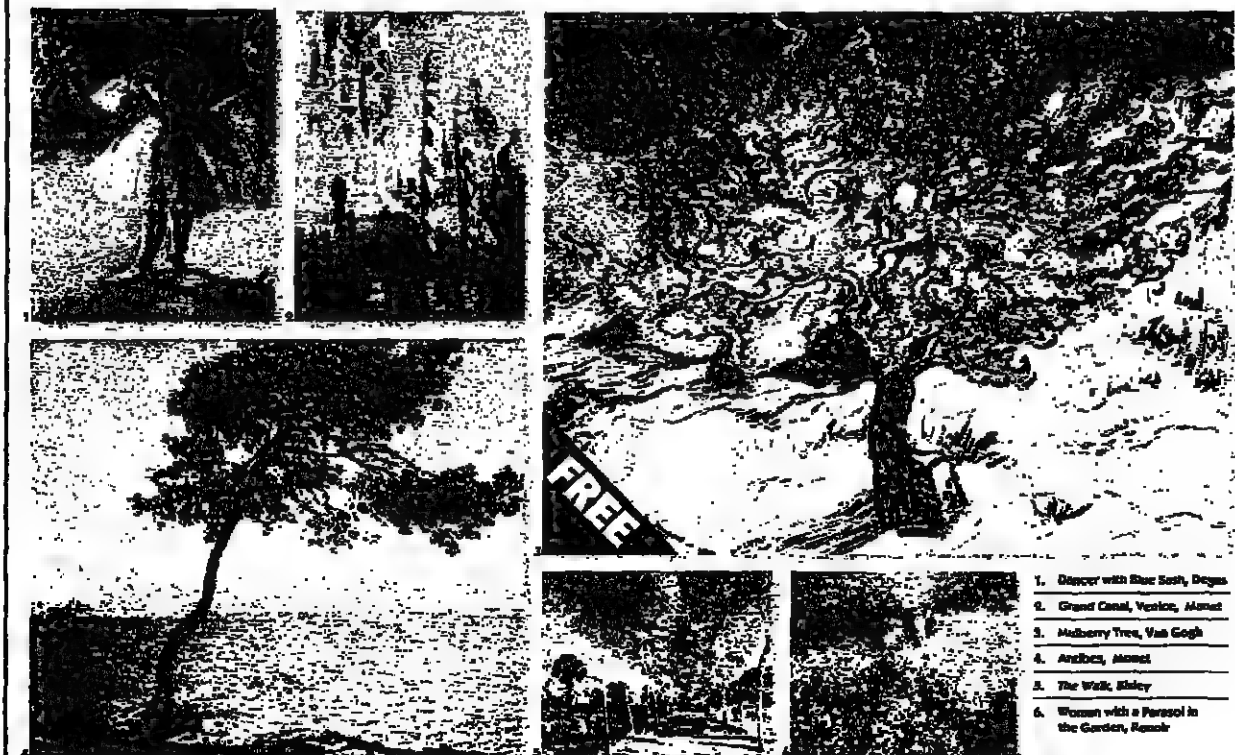
But *Gamma*'s mood is markedly different from the hypnotic video. The latter work was shown at the Lisson a few years ago, when an altar-like flight of steps leading to the screen enhanced its serenity. Now, however, the space is occupied by a disturbing presence. Moving out of *Gamma*, we walk up identical steps to a metal doorway. The door is open, and bears an inscription: "Two Man Policy No Lane Zone."

Nothing prevents us from stepping through to the darkness beyond, a space as empty and enigmatic as the rooms in the arsenal. Standing there, we hear sounds from the *Gamma* video punctuating the silence. Another open doorway, dramatically spotlighted, stands ahead, offering a chance to leave. But the exit sign glowing above it conveys no sense of welcome escape. After everything the Wilsons have done in their troubling show, the word reads instead like a final warning that the post-Greenham world will never be truly free from the threat of obliteration.

● Lisson Gallery, 52-54 Bell St, London NW1 0JG (011-724 239) until April 1

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## RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Mark Hargreaves

## LONDON

**DRACULA:** Northern Ballet Theatre brings Christopher Marlowe's chilling version of Bram Stoker's classic to London for a first showing. Denis Mackinnon directs the role of the toothy count to Philip Feeney's powerful score. Sadler's Wells (0171-715 0000). Opens tonight, 7.30pm. £5

**FORBIDDEN BROADWAY:** A second try by New York's long-running musical revue (showing pieces mostly) to adapt for London audiences. Jenny Street Theatre (0171-257 2070). Opens tonight, 7.30pm.

**LOW FLYING AIRCRAFT:** In a future transformed by the vast city of Heathrow four ordinary people try to cope. Dominic Hill directs a new play by Jane Cates. Orange Tree (0181-940 3833). Previews from tonight, 7.45pm. £5

## ELSEWHERE

**BIRMINGHAM:** Trading these days under his surname only, the virtuoso violinist Kennedy joins the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra for a performance of Sofia Gubaidulina's intense Violin Concerto inspired by works by Kurtág and Stravinsky. Symphony Hall (0121-212 3333). Tonight, 7.30pm. £5

**LIVERPOOL:** Gerard Schwarz, usually to be found on the podium in front of the Seattle SO, returns here after a three-year absence to conduct the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra in an evening of classics



Kennedy plays with the CBSO in Birmingham

# Climax soars to a Mutter

CONCERTS: The stars came out to wish André Previn a happy 70th birthday at the Barbican

Two clumps of greenery clung to each side of the Barbican stage, like weeds growing on a garden wall. Not much to look at for André Previn's 70th birthday gala concert. But for this final concert in the London Symphony Orchestra's birthday series the decorations were there where it mattered. In the music. Not to mention the guests. Previn's party had nothing but the best: Anne-Sophie Mutter and her violin, Kiril Te Kanawa and her baritone. There was also a gleaming new car in the foyer, advertising the evening's sponsors, the Rover Group.

At the end of the evening, the orchestra prematurely struck up *Happy Birthday to You* (the actual date is April 6). This was the worst music of the evening. The best by far was Beethoven's Violin Concerto, resplendent in Mutter's hands. In the 19 years since her teenage recording with Karajan, Mutter has speeded up, knocking a minute off her famously leisurely first movement. The poetry and delicacy have increased too.

During the lull, she made pianissimo sounds tender enough to make the gods weep, and, throughout, her notes sang so beautifully that the conventional display of the concerto's cadenza seemed beside the point. Previn, for his part, kept a firm grip, never letting the chunks of orchestral fire consume the violin in the opening allegro, keeping the lullaby variations rapt, releasing tension in the finale with a rondo knees-up. This was heavenly music-making.

It was also an impossible act to follow, as Te Kanawa discovered. Her party piece was the final scene from Strauss's *Capriccio*. Melodiously singing, to be sure, gracefully aristocratic in style. But the tone was a little lacking — if she were par-

quet flooring, you'd want to get out the polish and buff her — and enunciation sometimes lost out to the big Straussian orchestra throbbing behind.

For the concert's final number, the *Rosenkavalier* suite, the orchestra grew bigger still: whooping horns, a plangent celeste, an army of double-basses. As a musical structure, this out-and-paste assemblage of 1945, possibly the work of the conductor Arthur Rodzinski, totters most ungracefully, one extract piled on to another, with a threadbare little coda tacked on top. But it allowed Previn and the LSO to let rip, and sent the audience walking off happily into the Barbican concrete.

GEOFF BROWN



Anne-Sophie Mutter joins André Previn after stealing the show at his birthday party

## Homer fires kept burning

Nicholas Maw's *Odyssey* is famous for being the longest unbroken span of music in the orchestral repertoire. But, as Simon Rattle pointed out in a talk introducing his performance of this quixotic 95-minute work, that is also perhaps the least interesting thing about a score that is epic in every sense: although its title has Classical allusions, it evokes rather a long spiritual journey away from 20th-century musical ideologies and towards tonality.

Rattle has championed the work energetically, and with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra on stage he illustrated about the piece, giving the audience clear signposts from the "time chord" that punctuates the sections to the enormous main theme from which so much is developed. But whether *Odyssey* (completed in

1987) really belonged best as part of this *Towards the Millennium* survey of music from the 1980s is another matter: it developed as a tangent, albeit a colossal one, to what was important during the previous decade, and its performance here only underlined the slight British bias of this festival's programming.

Yet *Odyssey* deserves to be heard, and if British musicians do not play it, who will? In spite — or perhaps because — of its roots in the symphonic tradition, it is a work that could only have been written when it was by a British composer, but it is not a symphony: the structure of its four main parts and the logic of it in relation to Bruckner and Si-



Rattle drew a performance of total conviction

belius are but aspects of this very personal piece. It is easy to say that *Odyssey* is personal to the point of self-indulgence, and there are moments — long moments — where the thick scoring and slow pace pall. But it has a pulse of its own, and given the great length (44 bars) of the

main theme it demands space in which to grow. The theme itself, ranging across wide intervals and sounding both passionate and melancholy, is first heard on the cellos before being absorbed into the rich mosaic of the piece.

This was a performance of total conviction, which Rattle built unerringly. The almost shapeless opening, where music rises from the growling depths eventually to attain clarity, unfolded majestically, and the pastoral episodes of Part 2 and meditative beauty of Part 3 made their full impact.

Before the brutal climaxes which signal the Epilogue arrived, the CBSO weaved through the fluttering textures with virtuosic ease, and the final "homecoming" in an undisturbed E flat came as the relief it ought to be.

JOHN ALLISON

## Warm in Betty's shoes

Betty Carter's residences at Ronnie Scott's became such an institution that her death left an eerie silence. It took only one chorus to appreciate why Nene Freelon is regarded as a candidate to assume Carter's mantle. While it may not have been always an emotionally compelling performance — the technician sometimes got the better of the poet in her — this was as confident a debut London has seen in a while.

Carter must have grown tired of hearing reviewers compare her singing style to a horn player's. Freelon takes the same instrument-based approach, ornamenting each bar and rearranging the thrust of the lyrics to suit her own purposes. Her warm, rich voice has the suppleness of a Sarah Vaughan. On ballads she stretches vowels in the manner of the best gospel singers.



JAZZ

On occasion, the songs suffered from the bravura treatment. In her passion for improvising, Freelon seems reluctant to let a melody breathe naturally, and she is over-fond of shoe-horning tunes into stream-of-consciousness medleys: *Some Day My Prince Will Come* merged into *Just Friends*, *Nature Boy* and *My Favourite Things*. Audiences have to work hard to keep up.

The comparison with Carter extends, above all, to her choice of musicians. Not only has Freelon arrived with one of Carter's former drummers, the admirably crisp Will Terrill, but she clearly believes in bringing her sidemen right into the foreground. The pianist Takana Miyamoto makes a particularly sensitive accompanist, while Wayne Batchelor's brisk but controlled bass figures gave the quartet all the ballast it required.

Adding a percussionist was a bold move, and Beverley Botford's subtle colours brought an extra dimension to arrangements which were already a cut above the average.

The feminist sentiments of Nina Simone's *Four Women* were an audacious departure, introduced over strident bass and percussion. Freelon's proselytising instincts extend to her somewhat syrupy between-song chat. If she ever gives up the bandstand, she could set up her own talk show.

CLIVE DAVIS

## NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London  
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**ANIMAL CRACKERS:** Ben Keston, Joe Alessi and Toby Sedgwick play the three maniacs in a stage version of the Marx Brothers movie. First seen at Manchester's Royal Exchange. Lyric (0171-494 5045).

**TRUST:** Patrick O'Keefe plays a Belfast MP who is disastrously let down by his own family. Muck Gordon directs new Gary Mitchell drama. Ambassadors (0171-563 5000).

**BLUE HEART:** Caryl Churchill's wonderfully inventive pair of plays, revealing family troubles by way of tricks with words and time. Max Stafford-Clark directs for Out of Joint. Painesville Theatre (0171-608 1800).

**SLAVA'S SNOWSHOW:** The excellent Russian clown and mime artist Slava Polunin returns, with new material, new clowns as well as his unforgettable live. Painesville Theatre (0171-308 1734).

## FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

## NEW RELEASES

**PATCH ADAMS (12):** Robin Williams stars in this award movie about a doctor who wants to cure the world with laughter. Director Tom Shadyac creates an exuberant amount of sentiment with little artistic insight.

**PLEASANTVILLE (12):** Inexplicable spoof of American family values. Great performances from Tobey Maguire, Jeff Daniels, and Reese Witherspoon.

**CENTRAL STATION (15):** Walter Salles's Brazilian road movie creates a beautiful chemistry between a boy in search of his identity, and a cynical ex-teacher in search of his soul.

**SCHIZOPHOLIA (18):** Steven Soderbergh's experimental indie on corporate anxiety in ultra black, with comic angles and dialogue to match.

**CURRENT**  
**BELOVED (15):** Oprah Winfrey in superbly powerful role as runaway slave haunted by post-trauma, lynch

moths, and a dead daughter. Jonathan Demme's overlong film fails, however, to get inside the haunting heart of Toni Morrison's novel.

**FEVER (15):** Thomas Vinterberg's bleak, black, Danish film features a character family reunion. Shot with handheld cameras, it manages to look spontaneous, ghostly, and deliciously voyeuristic.

**THE 39 STEPS (15):** Hitchcock's witty take on Buchan's rapping yarn is a full-on thriller. Robert Walker's smooth baritone shines across Scotland pursued by scampering police and ruthless spies.

**THE THIN RED LINE (15):** A glittering cast of American soldiers during the Second World War. Terrence Malick's artistic masterpiece about nature, war, and the human condition. Chaplin, and Nick Nolte.

**YOU'RE GOT MAIL (PG):** Built-proof romantic blockbuster with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan who fall in love in a bookstore. Written and directed by Nora Ephron.

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# Inner cities look East

New housing can reflect the needs of ethnic communities, says Stella Bingham

Projects designed to regenerate inner-city wastelands usually concentrate on housing shortages, family size, density and design. The ethnic origin of those likely to be living in them is rarely taken into account. But two schemes address the needs and aspirations of multicultural urban dwellers.

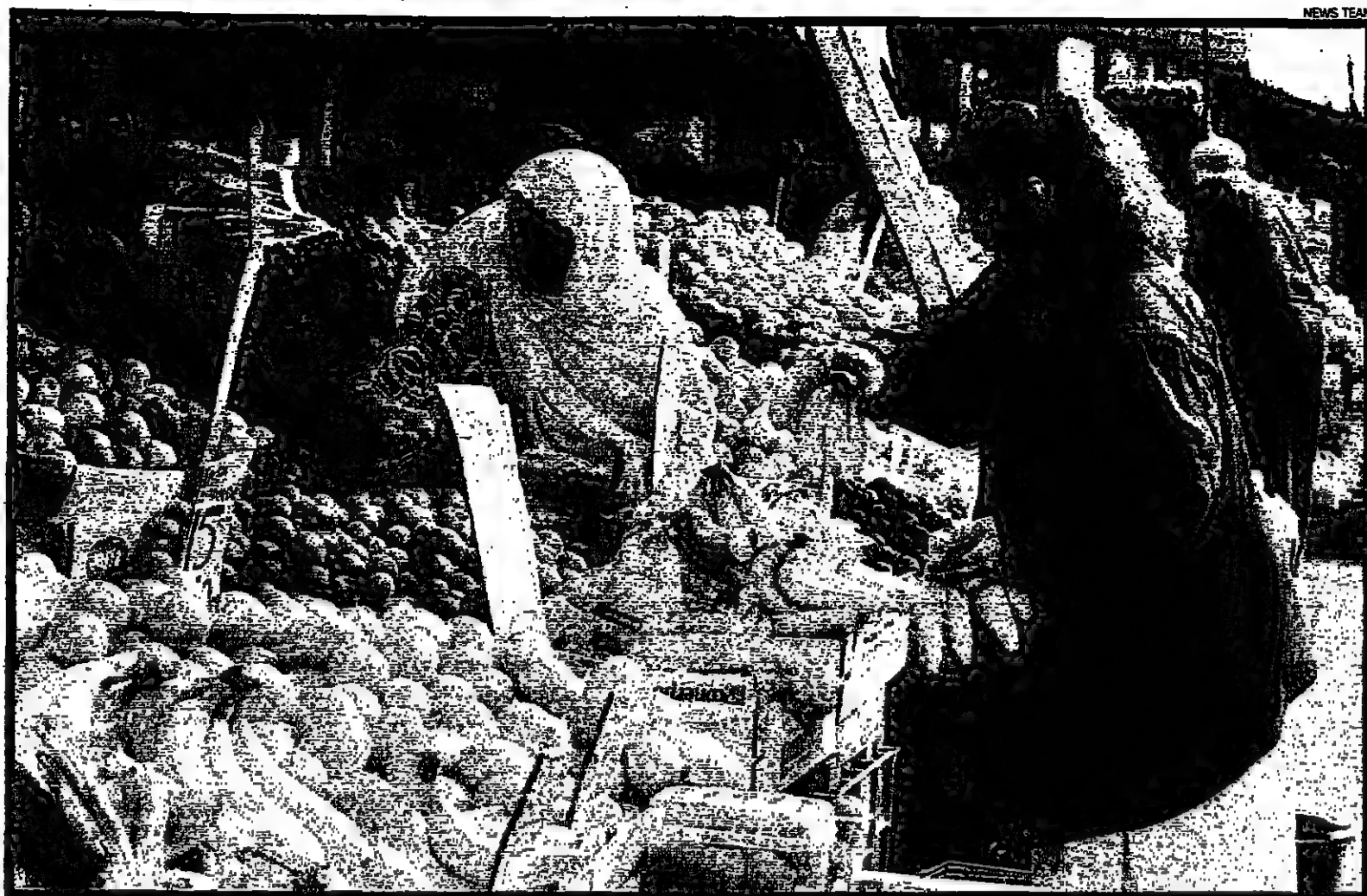
In Birmingham the Salford and Small Heath Single Regeneration Budget scheme covers a district with a population of 55,000. "The area has always had an itinerant population and now the important group is South Asian. Some areas are 70 per cent South Asian," says Wendy Shillam, a partner with Shillam & Smith, the community architects for the scheme.

"It is essentially a Victorian suburb but the housing is in a very bad state, built on heathland and former brick pits. A lot of the property is owner-occupied but often it is not in good condition because the owners haven't the wherewithal for the upkeep."

Another problem is sheer size. "South Asian families tend to live in large, extended households which the average two-up, two-down cannot accommodate. Often they would buy two and knock them into one, but such homes are very unadaptable. The project aims to improve and provide more housing and regenerate the area. Our aim is to have more community-led strategies," she says.

The first challenge was to find out what residents actually wanted from the scheme. "We linked up with the mobile library to talk to people. And we instituted a public art project, which helped us to communicate with two groups we felt were missing — Asian women and children. We addressed some of the housing issues they wanted, such as the quality of external space and healthier living."

The year-long consultation



A consultation with inner-city residents resulted in a report, spelling out how housing should change to reflect the needs of multicultural communities

resulted in a detailed report about how housing should change to reflect the needs of the population. "Residents wanted flexibility, the ability to put two houses together or split them apart," Ms Shillam says. "Aesthetically, they wanted to get away from the Victorian imperialist style. And they wanted a low-energy building that considered the ecology."

"Larger and more flexible homes would be more attractive not only to South Asians, but to people with elderly relatives, older children or those starting a business at home."

The first results of the public consultation will be in starting contrast to the traditional red-brick terraces. Some of the 34 flat-roofed, concrete houses will be grouped round a courtyard to reflect the Asian homeland pattern of living. Exteriors will be robust, possibly brightly painted, simple, easy to repair or change and designed to grow old gracefully.

"None of the internal partitions is structural, so you can change and add on as you have the money," she says. "We're building homes 20 per cent bigger for the same money, so they won't have a fully fitted kitchen and all the other things you get in a spec building. You can walk in and live there and add on as you want to and can afford to. There will be no brass doorknobs and micro-waves but you will have space."

Shillam & Smith hopes to obtain planning permission soon. "We had to be careful to convince the planners that the houses wouldn't go out of fashion in a very short time. But the construction techniques are tried and tested and we have the support of the community," Ms Shillam says. "A number of developers are already showing interest."

"The housing addresses the specialist issues not only of the South Asians, but also the wider issues of how we want to live. This project helps us to make living in inner cities more acceptable and attractive."

A similar idealism is at the heart of the project which inspires Saif Ahmad, the chief executive of the North London Muslim Housing Association.

The association, which has 400 homes in the London boroughs of Tower Hamlets, Newham, Hackney and Waltham Forest, has unveiled a ten-year, £500 million programme to build 10,000 homes in some of London's most deprived districts.

"Rome wasn't built in a day and you have to have the right vision," Mr Ahmad says. "The main point is to regenerate the community, to foster tolerance, understanding, care for each other and to enrich British society with its diverse cultural heritage."

There are about 250,000 Muslims in the four boroughs and Mr Ahmad would like them to be seen as a unifying force. "We are not a fifth column. I would like to create a community for people who live here and love it. Tower Hamlets and Newham are 50 per cent Muslim. Some council estates are 95 per cent Bangladeshi, which creates an insular community. If 50 per cent were local and 50 per cent from various Muslim ethnic groups, that would create a diverse community. People often say integration at what price. We say integration through tolerance," he says.

Raising the money is the first hurdle. "We calculate that there are untapped resources that go East, which can be used to regenerate communities here. In Britain and outside there are individuals eager to see the scheme go through. Most housing schemes are based on private

finance and government grants. We are trying to find the mechanism with which we can tap into government resources for a head start, but it is a new model and we need to talk to a lot of people."

The association plans a first phase of 50 to 100 houses. "We are trying to identify a locality with the need and a favourable host community. Once the first project goes through, we can go to the Government with an example. Once the model starts, after three or four years the scheme will gain momentum," he says.

Mr Ahmad hopes to incorporate Islamic architectural influences of the sort seen in Spain and Portugal into basic British house designs. "We are discussing this with architects and English Heritage and will adjust according to the rules. This is about regeneration in quite deprived areas. There is a religious obligation to help out."

## SMART MOVES

### Lord Soper's house for sale

THE home of Lord Soper, the radical preacher who spread messages of faith at Speakers' Corner for 70 years, is for sale for £600,000. Lord Soper, who died in December, aged 95, was still preaching in his last year of life, despite being confined to a wheelchair. The detached three-bedroom house in Bigwood Road, in the heart of Hampstead Garden Suburb, had been his home for 30 years. "It's an attractive double-gabled, cottage-style property with gardens on two sides," says Keith Ackerman, of Benham & Reeves.



Lord Soper: radical messages

PARK HOUSE, in Rutland Gate — located in the grounds of Rutland House, in Knightsbridge — is for sale. The house was built for John Sheepshanks (1787-1863), an art connoisseur and public benefactor whose collections of British paintings included Constables and Turners. It has recently been occupied by the Accademia Italiana, which took it over from the French Consulate in 1989, and is for sale through Michael Tims & Company for £8 million.

THE former dowry house where Beatrix Potter wrote *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* is up for sale. Eastwood House, near Dunkeld in Perthshire, is located on the banks of the River Tay, and few people realise how important Scotland was to the writer and the influence that it had on her.



Peter Rabbit: created in Scotland

Potter, who with her brother Bertram had a strict upbringing in Kensington, West London, was educated mainly by governesses. The most exciting moments of her life were holidays in rural Scotland, where Potter met Charlie McIntosh, an amateur naturalist who inspired her fascination with nature.

Potter frequently visited Eastwood, where she also created Mrs Tiggywinkle and Jeremy Fisher.

The property's impressive garden, now firmly netted against rabbits, leads down to the river, which is well-stocked with salmon. William Jackson, of Knight Frank,

says: "There is a demand for country houses in Perthshire and it is rare that one of such quality is offered for sale. I believe that the addition of the salmon fishing on one of Scotland's most famous rivers will add to the interest."

Knight Frank's Edinburgh office is letting the partly furnished house for an initial period of two to three years. The annual rent, including gardening services, is £20,000.

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CHANGING TIMES

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An obvious choice would be a close friend. But let's face it, we don't always choose our friends for their amazing powers of tact, diplomacy and discretion. Tell one person, and you may end up telling the world.

You may be lucky enough to be able to talk to someone in your family. Then again, you may be one of the large number of people who find talking to your nearest and dearest agonisingly embarrassing.

A girlfriend or boyfriend? If you can, great. But sometimes we don't want to expose our weaknesses to those who fancy us.

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the very problem you want to discuss.

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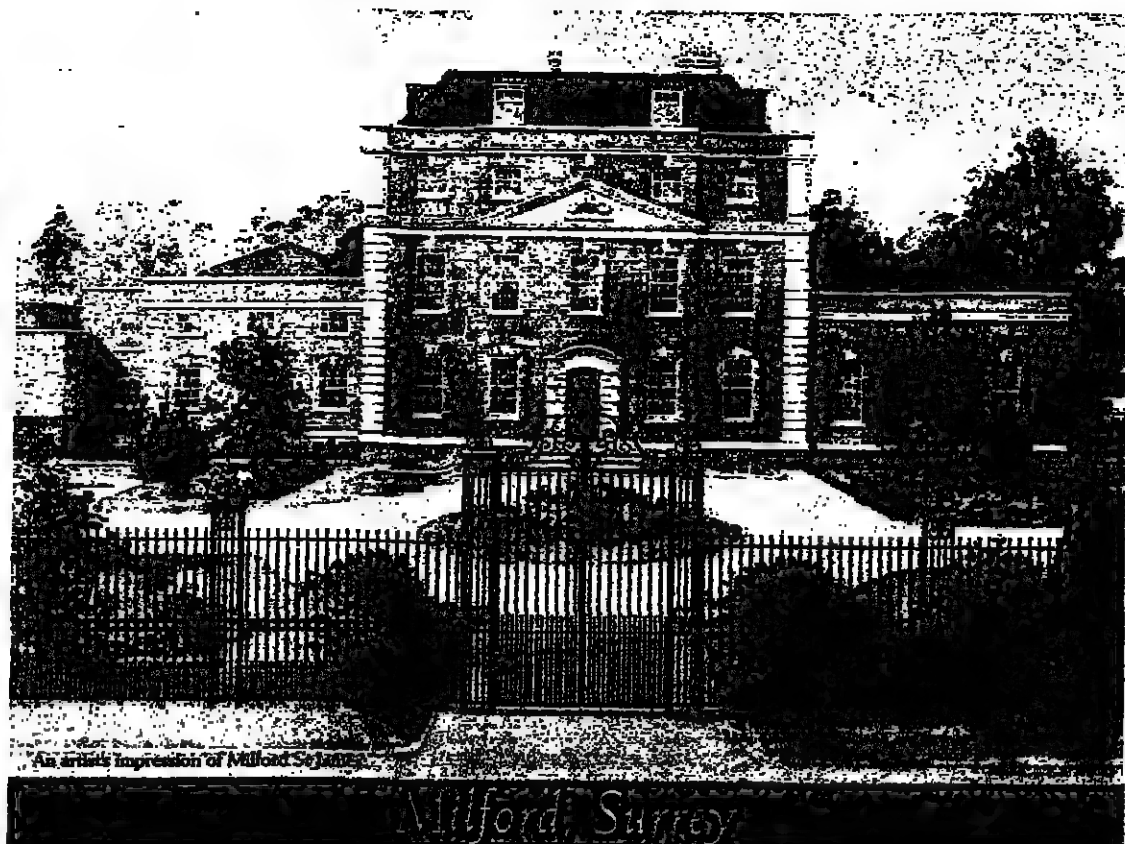
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# Great pitch — a shame about the players

It's only after seeing him being interviewed by Alan Hansen on *Football Millionaires* (BBC1) that you understand how David Beckham can run up a £1,000 telephone bill talking to his fiancée, Posh Spice, during a World Cup qualifying week in Georgia.

The first £1,000 must have been swallowed up just struggling to tell her what the weather was like. Talking coherently really does seem to be that much of an effort for him. If listening to Beckham speak keeps you on the edge of your seat, it's not because he is saying anything gripping, but because you're worrying if he's going to make it to the end of the sentence. Beckham has the football talent of a Tizio, but the mental complexity of a tomato.

But so what if he does? Beckham doesn't earn £8 million a year as a stand-up comedian. He's a footballer. He's not paid to sound eloquent. There are very few

players like Camus, or even Canto, on today's pitches. Even great novelists can sound as dull as dirt when asked to speak in public. Then again, why should we expect writers to sound fluent when their skill is milking 500 usable words out of their typewriter every day?

Beckham's inarticulacy last night was not really his problem. But it certainly was Hansen's. It meant that a documentary which must have sounded tantalising when it was being pitched — there are 70 millionaires in the Premiership, and rich footballers now have a magazine just for them, full of adverts aimed at the thickness of their wallets — proved less riveting than watching Scarborough play.

This may explain why Hansen kept returning, like a desperate drunk to the liquor bottle, to players like David Ginola and Tony Adams. Ginola and Adams, while they weren't saying much, at least said it in joined-up thinking.

Michael Owen and Alan Shearer also spoke to Hansen in full sentences, but they have both become so slick at answering journalists' questions in a way that sounds accommodating while actually giving nothing away that they, too, told us little we didn't know about modern football.

If you needed this programme to inform you that top footballers are now as famous as film stars, and earn at least as much, then you're probably not the sort of person who would have been watching anyway.

The one new fact to emerge — well, Hansen certainly made it sound like a scoop — was Beckham's admission that after his fateful sending-off during last summer's World Cup, Hoddle didn't even speak to him after the game. So Beckham behaved like a spoilt brat, after which Hoddle behaved like a chilly, chamele-

## REVIEW



Joe Joseph

chur: actually, there's not much new there, either. Still, the clips of all those goals were good.

I'm not sure that Germaine Greer: Close to the Bone, Louise Wardle's film for BBC2's *Close Up* series, told us anything we didn't know about its subject either, but at least it told it entertainingly, with plenty of delicious archive footage. The problem with Greer, of course, is not getting her

to talk but shutting her up. She is fiercely smart. Nevertheless, a lot of what she says is either outrageous or barking, which doesn't stop her believing it entirely, and passionately: this is part of her strange charm.

For example, nobody will faint with shock when they read that the subtitle of her new book, *The Whole Woman*, is "It's Time To Get Angry Again". Greer can get angry about three new things before breakfast. And she'll never tap you on the shoulder to attract your attention if she can grab you by the lapels and hoist you against the wall. Getting angry has become such an instinctive part of her approach to the world that she can now say even very obvious or banal things (such as, "yes is often drunk with milk") as if she were revealing a great truth — and if we dunderheads refuse to acknowledge this important truth, then the world will go to hell in a hand-

basket ("For Chrissake, if women aren't being offered milk in their tea, then a helluva lot of women are simply not getting tea the way they like it. It's insanity!"). Don't bother arguing back. As wide as Greer's vocabulary is, "I take your point" is not a phrase she probably uses often.

Listen to her giving a lecture. She is explaining to her mostly female audience why sexual intercourse is not necessarily a mark of intimacy by comparing it to sticking her little finger up a man's nostril. To Greer, both acts represent the same degree of penetration ("You're not really inside them at all"). Now, either I'm doing something wrong, or there's actually quite a big difference between these two actions — and that's over and above what Greer's thesis might imply about people who pick their own nose in public. Greer herself seems to be past

penetration, past earth-shaking orgasms (too exhausting, she says) and, for all we know, past inserting her finger up men's nostrils, because she confessed that what she now likes doing best is thinking: "I'm very keen on thinking." But what makes her stand out is that few people are willing then to bare their thoughts and passions so publicly, unconcerned about how batty others might find her.

The jacket designers of her new book had to bite their tongue when she rejected their prototypes in favour of a photograph of her taking on a Philippine fertility amulet embedded in a raw steak (which she later ate), an image which she believed conveyed the meaty, bloody, fertility of womanhood. It would have been nice to know if this image also reminded David Beckham of his beloved Posh — provided, of course, we had enough time to hang around for his answer.

### BBC1

- 6.00am Business Breakfast (60958)
- 7.00 BBC Breakfast News (1) (3017)
- 9.00 Kilroy (1) (2453291)
- 9.45 Wipeout (591956)
- 10.10 The Viewers' Choice (1) (7342630)
- 10.55 News: Weather (1) (301217)
- 11.00 Change That (3012494)
- 11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (1) (3082253)
- 11.55 News: Weather (1) (7860231)
- 12.00 Call My Bluff (29494)
- 12.30pm Top Tip Challenge (1) (443849)
- 12.55 The Weather Show (1) (54587949)
- 1.00 One O'Clock News (1) (35104)
- 1.30 Regional News: Weather (5940824)
- 1.40 News: Weather (1) (35104)
- 1.40 News: Weather (1) (35104)
- 2.05 Ironside (1) (5760727)
- 2.35 Children's BBC: Playdays (6036224)
- 3.45 Little Monsters (6036224)
- 3.50 ChuckleVision (400125) 4.10 See It, Say It (534387) 4.35 The Wild House (390727) 5.00 Newsround (445253)
- 5.10 Blue Peter (3332340)
- 5.35 News: Weather (1) (35104)
- 6.00 Six O'Clock News: Weather (1) (658)
- 6.30 Regional News Magazine (611)
- 7.00 **CHOICE** Megalab '99 Peter Snow and Philippa Forrester encourage viewers to take part in the largest ever mass participation experiment (1) (3307)



Kate Winslet in a scene from the long-running medical drama (8pm)

- 8.00 **CHOICE** Casualty 250: The Full Medical A celebration of Britain's longest-running medical drama, drawing on the experiences of those familiar with Holby City A&E (1) (287765)
- 8.50 The National Lottery: Greatest Hits Heaven 17 provide the music as Angela Griffin presents the draw (1) (524727)
- 9.00 Nine O'Clock News: Regional News: Weather (1) (8727) (8727)
- 9.30 Jasper Carrott Back to the Front More stand-up comedy (4/8) (1) (34814)
- 10.00 **CHOICE** The X-Files An attempt on the life of a psychic boy and a chance encounter with a woman from Mulder's past spark an investigation which may finally unravel the mystery of the X-Files. Last in series (7) (780388)
- 10.50 Casualty 250 Poisonous gas floods the docks, and Baz reveals that a friend may be responsible (1) (1) (734415)
- 11.40 Prelude to a Kiss (1994) A mysterious old man can't wait to undergo a bizarre personality change. Romantic fantasy, with Meg Ryan and Alec Baldwin. Directed by Norman René (1) (406765)
- 12.00am Weather (101234)
- 1.25 BBC News 24 (35360895)

### WALES

- 10.50 The State (955330) 11.20 Casualty 250 (1) (41307) 12.00am RSN: Prelude to a Kiss (1) (387578) 1.00 News (1) (1204166)
- 1.35-6.00 BBC News 24 (34554352)

### BBC2

- 7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Pingu (737127) 7.05 Teletubbies (683172) 7.30 Snorks (823185) 7.50 The Really Wild Show (3341456) 8.10 Rewind (3782727) 8.20 Top Gear (5939748) 8.40 Polka Dot Shorts (1987494) 8.50 Pingu (1983678) 9.00 Images of Style (7505484) 9.10 What? Where? When? Why? (7555530) 9.25 The Art (483820) 9.45 Words and Pictures (6814630) 10.00 Teletubbies (12765)
- 10.30 Number One (516104) 10.45 Watch (5161659) 11.00 Around Scotland (3182104) 11.20 The Geography Programme (3038104) 11.40 Science in Action (5410185) 12.00 News: Weather (1) (3174814)
- 12.15pm Hello Aus Berlin (4962388) 12.30 Working Lunch (45 920) 1.00 Brum (6880624)
- 1.10 War Walks (3/6) (1) (41637920)
- 1.40 Hart-Davis on History (35560475)
- 2.10 Aweash with Colour (56320524)
- 2.40 News: Weather (1) (3174814)
- 2.45 Westminster (1) (5849001)
- 3.50 News: Weather (1) (6028601)
- 3.55 Kaye Advice show (9359291)
- 4.25 Ready, Steady, Cook (1) (6045038)
- 4.55 Esther (1) (5020017)
- 5.30 Whose House? (388)
- 6.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation Picard is forced to confront a difficult episode from his past (1) (1) (863017)



Sarah Michelle Gellar stars as the high school heroine (8.45pm)

- 6.45 Buffy the Vampire Slayer Buffy comes to the aid of Cordelia, the school's most popular pupil (1) (287104)
- 7.30 Sophie Grigson's Herbs Tasty ideas for a salmon and dill burger (1) (765)
- 8.00 University Challenge (1) (5036)
- 8.30 Looking Good Good Stateside fashions, a bargain alternative to a facelift and a guide to applying mascara (1) (4543)
- 9.00 **CHOICE** Modern Times: Diana's Neighbours Report on why angry London residents are opposing plans to build a memorial garden commemorating the life of Diana, Princess of Wales (1) (775920)
- 9.50 Trouble at the Top A £12million project to transform a dilapidated mansion into London's first five-star club (1) (512814)
- 10.30 Newswatch (1) (636253)
- 11.13 Video Nation Shorts (1) (100678)
- 11.15 A Living Hell The family of a suicide victim describe the reality of living with a manic depressive (3/3) (710949)
- 11.55 Weather (978633)
- 12.00 Despatch Box (50895)
- 12.30am BBC Learning Zone: Open University: Lucky Science 1.00 Tropical Forest 1.30 Managing for Biodiversity: Forests in Trinidad 2.00 Schools: Science 4.00 Languages: Make German Your Business 5.00 RSN: Nursing Updates 5.45 Open University: Body Plans 6.10 Insect: Diversity 6.35 Molluscs, Mechanisms and Minds

### HTV

- 5.30am HTV Morning News (25386)
- 6.00 GMTV (5824948)
- 9.25 Trisha (1) (8856878)
- 10.30 This Morning (1) (44461272)
- 12.15pm HTV News and Weather (1) (495814)
- 12.30 HTV Lunchtime News: Weather (1) (4438017)
- 12.55 Shortland Street Nick falls on his feet (9665727)
- 1.30 Home and Away Kai leaves Summer Bay (1) (3578494)
- 1.55 The Jerry Springer Show Outrageous talk show from America (1) (3583758)
- 2.40 Wheel of Fortune (1) (181366)
- 3.10 HTV News: Weather (1) (495814)
- 3.15 HTV News (1) (495826)
- 3.20 CTV: Mopart's Shop (4613475) 3.30 Teddycars (6573388) 3.40 Jumanji (9334982) 4.05 Hey Arnold! (9019611) 4.35 Wildcat (308123)
- 5.00 Home and Away Kai leaves Summer Bay (1) (3578)
- 5.30 WEST: Live and Local Richard Wyatt, Polly Lloyd and Simon Whitty report from a family farm on Exmoor (814)
- 5.30 WALES: Up Beat (2/6) (1) (814)
- 5.58 HTV Weather (706494)
- 5.59 HTV Crimestoppers (706494)
- 6.00 HTV News (1) (727)
- 6.30 HTV Evening News: Weather (1) (307)
- 7.00 Coronation Street Nick and Leanne reveal their news (1) (3814)



Dwight Yorke will be looking to add to United's two goal lead (7.30pm)

- 7.30 The Big Match — Live! Internazionale v Manchester United (Kick-off 7.45pm). Bob Wilson introduces full coverage of this vital European Cup quarter-final second leg at the San Siro in Milan. Subsequent programmes are subject to change (1) (881185)
- 10.00 Birth Race 2000: On Your Marks Introduction for couples planning a Millennium baby (740498)
- 10.05 Polo Play Cheating in the sports world (1) (420494)
- 11.00 HTV Nightly News: Weather (1) (687017)
- 11.20 HTV News and Weather (1) (572748)
- 11.30 The Big Match Highlights of tonight's second leg of the European Cup quarter-finals (68038)
- 12.35am A Taste for Killing (1992) Two spoilt graduates working on an oil rig find their only friend has an ulterior motive for helping them. Thriller, starring Michael Biehn. Directed by Lou Antonio (79876)
- 2.10 The Big Match Dynamo Kiev v Real Madrid (620234)
- 3.50 HTV Sport Classics (6203924)
- 4.20 The Making of Ever After: A Cinderella Story Behind the scenes of the romance, starring Drew Barrymore (1) (7493078)
- 4.50 HTV Nightscreen Behind the scenes of TV programmes (4368782)
- 5.00 Coronation Street (1) (1) (68234)

### CENTRAL

- As HTV West except:
- 12.20-12.30pm Central News: Weather (718782)
- 12.55 Home and Away (4448336)
- 1.25 The Jerry Springer Show (4001630)
- 2.10-2.40 Echo Point (56357678)
- 3.15-3.20 Central News: Weather (492982)
- 5.30 Shortland Street (814)
- 6.00-6.30 Central News at Six: Weather (727)
- 11.20-11.30 Central News: Weather (572746)
- 3.55am Central Jobfinder '99 (542573)
- 5.20-5.30 Asian Eye (3244165)
- As HTV West except:
- 12.15-12.27pm Westcountry News: Weather (495814)
- 12.27-12.30 Illuminations (7105901)
- 12.55-1.25 Westcountry Lunchtime Live (4446038)
- 1.25 The Jerry Springer Show (4001630)
- 2.10-2.40 Home and Away (56357678)
- 3.15-3.20 Westcountry News: Weather (492982)
- 4.59-5.00 Birthday People (7708833)
- 5.30 Peter Gorton for Starters (814)
- 6.00-6.30 Westcountry Live: Weather (727)
- 11.20-11.30 Westcountry News: Weather (572746)

- As HTV West except: 12.15pm-12.30pm Meridian News: Weather (495814) 5.30 Country Vets (5/6) (1) (814) 6.00-6.30 Meridian Tonight (1) (727) 7.25-7.30 Meridian Weather (570543) 11.20-11.30 Meridian News: Weather (1) (572746) 5.00am-5.30 Freezone (1) (88234)

- As HTV West except: 12.15pm Anglia Air Watch (7116017) 12.20-12.30 Anglia News and Weather (7197982) 5.30 Whiplash (819) (1) (814) 5.58 Anglia Weather (1) (706494) 6.00-6.30 Anglia News (1) (727) 11.19 Anglia Air Watch (19475) 11.20-11.30 Anglia News and Weather (1) (572746)

- Starts: 6.00am Sesame Street (1) (88739524) 7.00 The Big Breakfast (5776253) 9.00 Yorkshire: The Mix (9733785) 9.30 News: Weather (1) (88739524) 9.45 Book Box (74968104) 10.00 Stage Two Science (91723388) 10.15 All About Us (91706611) 10.30 The French Programme (51434272) 10.50 Stop, Look, Listen (85352771) 11.00 TV Angliachief (15879920) 11.15 Tackling Technology (15895543) 11.30 Powerhouse (1) (88194583) 12.00 Sesame Street (1) (9713901) 12.30pm Planned Plant (1) (67785340) 1.30 The Cheltenham Festival (64812833) 4.30 Dishes (1) (57026543) 5.00 Planned Plant (1) (67785340) 5.30 Countdown (1) (6740123) 6.00 Newsday (6) (1) (93363333) 6.30 Newsday (6) (1) (93363333) 7.00 Newsday (6) (1) (93363333) 7.30 Newsday (6) (1) (93363333) 8.00 Newsday (6) (1) (93363333) 8.30 Newsday (6) (1) (93363333) 9.00 Newsday (6) (1) (93363333) 9.30 Newsday (6) (1) (93363333) 10.00 Newsday (6) (1) (93363333) 10.30 Newsday (6) (1) (93363333) 11.00 Newsday (6) (1) (93363333) 11.30 Newsday (6) (1) (93363333) 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## CRICKET 45

Lara rewarded for his leading role

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## SPORT

WEDNESDAY MARCH 17 1999

## RUGBY UNION 46

Catt keeps his balance after latest recall



Lightning strikes twice as brilliant Irish champion takes opening-day Festival honours

# Istabraq hurdles into the realms of greatness

By Alan Lee, Racing Correspondent

THE race was over in the time that it takes to change gear in a car or to shake the reins of a horse. In that seminal moment, as Charlie Swan asked a searching question and Istabraq gave a breathtaking response, the doubts were silenced, months of speculation seemed foolish and the stature of one of the greatest hurdlers was established.

They were approaching the final turn in the Smurfit Champion Hurdle, Cheltenham's daunting hill ahead, when Swan engaged the weapon he knew that the rest could not counter. Overdrive. As Istabraq quickened, the roar from the 45,000 crowd drowned out all but the conviction of the jockey in front. "When I kicked, I thought nothing will go past us now," Swan said.

Nothing, in fact, came close. Istabraq crossed the final flight in glorious isolation and through the eventual margin was 3½ lengths, compared with 12 over the same runner-up, Theatreworld, last year, only the most grudging, sceptical soul would suggest that this is a horse past his best.

Swan had no cause to get serious with his horse; indeed, he had plenty of time to perfect his victory salute. The proximity of Theatreworld, his bridesmaid of a stablemate finishing second for the third successive year, was deceptive. And in the sunlit winner's enclosure, as a section of the

## Cheltenham



99 Festival

Armchair View ..... 42  
Tizzard joy ..... 42  
Knight on guard ..... 43  
All today's runners ..... 43

crowd sang a self-composed ode to the champion, nobody cared anyway.

Istabraq — an Arabic word meaning to run like lightning — fulfils the bold confidence of his name. He is the first horse to retain the hurdling title since See You. Then in 1986 and few doubt that he can further emulate that horse by completing the hat-trick next year. Coral and the Tote last night offered only 6-4 against it, though such odds will not look so cramped if he makes it back next March.

He is so clearly a class above his generation that this race had intrigued not in the usual anticipatory skirmish of



Swan leads Istabraq through the adoring Cheltenham throng into the winner's enclosure after their emphatic triumph

## RESULT

- 1, Istabraq ..... 4-9 fav
- 2, Theatreworld ..... 16-1
- 3, French Holly ..... 11-2
- 4, Mister Morose ..... 100-1

ery of his jumping should not bring him down. The horse did sweat freely, but on such a day he was not alone in that, and he jumped impeccably other than fiddling the last two. "If he'd jumped them better we'd have won even easier," Swan said. "I didn't want to hit the front so soon, but I really had no choice. He has such speed now."

French Holly was far from disgraced in third, making a race of it until that last turn.

He was overhauled by Theatreworld on the run to the line and Ferdie Murphy, his trainer, said: "The way we rode him may have cost us second place." These, though, are very different horses. The giant French Holly may now become a star over fences, but Istabraq will never venture beyond the smaller obstacles. At 7, there is neither cause nor temptation to think of change, let alone rest or retirement.

As with all great horses, especially Irish ones, he touches the lives of many. J. P. McManus, his charismatic owner, said: "What Istabraq is doing controls how many of us run our lives — myself, my family and friends, but others, too. People want to know his plans before they book their

holidays." McManus had not backed Istabraq — "at those odds it wouldn't have made me feel any better" — but he did admit to being a financial casualty of his two heavily backed runners in the opening Clifton Supreme Novices Hurdle. Now, though, he was feeling no pain.

Owner and trainer will take time to debate plans, but the indication is that Istabraq may run next at Punchestown rather than at Aintree, the scene of his only defeat in his past 16 races. Wherever he goes, Swan will go with him, now until their mutual retirement. "I'll be back next year and for a fourth and fifth year if it happens," he said. "So long as he is here, I will go on riding."

## Ferguson's taunts provoke angry riposte from Inter

FROM MATT DICKINSON IN MILAN

IF IT was a reaction that Alex Ferguson was after, Internazionale took the bait yesterday. Increasingly riled by the Manchester United manager's incessant references to their habitual skulduggery, the Italians responded with a few acerbic words of their own.

Quite why Ferguson, whose team lead 2-0 from the first leg, should have wanted to stir such hostility in the build-up to the European Cup quarter-final tonight, is not immediately apparent. Perhaps he calculates that Inter have more to lose from an ill-tempered game? Maybe he thinks his team will respond best by walking into a whirlwind? Whatever the reasoning, one hopes that he has read the situation correctly because he has turned his team, and particularly himself, into headline villains in Milan.

Mircea Lucescu, the Inter coach, believes that Ferguson risked trouble among supporters by his comments before the first tie, and the Romanian's highly-publicised yesterday ensured that the eardrums will be close to bursting as 80,000 supporters — at least 4,000 of them from Manchester — cram into the San Siro tonight.

"I always believed in the English sense of fair play,"



Ronaldo's return ..... 44  
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Lucescu said, "but then Alex Ferguson is from Scotland. And they don't have fair play there apparently. I have a great admiration for him as a coach, so I am very sad that someone like him should make these comments and that a club of Manchester United's stature should be involved in this way. I always thought United had a certain style."

"Before the game in England, some of the messages might have incited problems in the crowd. It is a sad thing and a bad thing, but maybe Ferguson has done it because he is afraid. That is what you have to ask yourself. Surely there can be no other explanation."

Amid the hurrying of unpleasantries, there was a serious point to be made. Roy Keane,

Paul Scholes and Denis Irwin were all cautioned in the first game, and a repeat would mean suspension from the first leg of the semi-final. Given that Gilles Veissiere, the French referee, showed no hesitation in dismissing Steve McManaman and Paul Ince when Liverpool played Valencia in the UEFA Cup this season, discipline will be surrendered at a cost.

"I think we have a good referee tomorrow," Ferguson said. "I hope so. If that is the case, we can see a very good match, a fair match. Then everyone is pleased."

Pressed on his criticism of Inter by an Italian journalist, his response was pointed: "You will get a fair game from Manchester United."

With Beckham and Baggio,



Lucscu: public rebut

## Tears flow as Pitman calls it a day

By Alan Lee

EMOTIONAL scenes are commonplace in the winner's enclosure at Cheltenham but the tears do not often flow before a race has been run. Yesterday was different. The Festival crowd was enjoying the spring sunshine, an hour before the off, when Jenny Pitman arrived at the microphone to announce her retirement.

She was dressed in scarlet because, she said, she felt so pale, but it quickly seemed that black would have been more appropriate to the mood she would create. After two introductory comments, she choked on her words. "This will be my last Cheltenham as a professional trainer," she managed to say, whereupon the thousands on the terracing around the parade ring burst into prolonged, spontaneous applause.

Retirements need not be sad but they are invariably emotional. The farewell of Mrs J. Pitman, OBE, of Upper Lambourn, was a rival to that of Mr H. D. Bird, of Barnsley, in the white handkerchief stakes.

Pitman, 52, had somehow kept her decision secret and the impact was all the greater for that. The first lady of training, who numbers two Gold Cup and two Grand National winners on her glittering CV, had chosen her own way of announcing the end and, once she had rediscovered the power of speech, she did so with characteristic eloquence.

Her Weathercock House yard will be taken over by her son, Mark, who himself was close to tears as his mother explained the bombshell, starting with a reassurance. Only last year, she was having treatment for thyroid cancer but she insisted yesterday: "I'm not ill, so don't think there is bad news following this."

"I am not going for any reason other than it's the right thing to do. Mark has outgrown his own yard, so this is for him. I've loved my job, that is the difficulty. I signed some papers at breakfast-time this morning, handing over the yard to Mark, and I think I had to do it then or I'd have bottled out. I started crying at six this morning and I hoped

I would have stopped by now."

The farmer's daughter from Leicestershire has never denied that she is kinder to horses than humans and her brusque manner with those unwise enough to cross her contrasts with the passionate attachment to every inmate of her stables.

There have been plenty of good ones since she moved into Lambourn in 1977, after the end of her marriage to the former jockey, Richard Pitman, but it was Corbiere who brought her to national attention by winning the Grand National in 1993. Yesterday, she wore a brooch of a horse in Corbiere colours.

Having become the woman to train the winner of the National, she did it again in 1995 with Royal Athlete. By then, she had also been re-

## PITMAN'S PROGRESS

Born: June 11, 1946. First trainer's licence: 1975. Awarded OBE: 1998

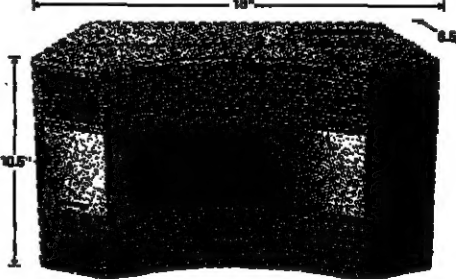
**BIG RACES WON**  
Grand National: Corbiere, 1993.  
Royal Athlete, 1995.  
Cheltenham Gold Cup: Burrough Hill Lad, 1994; Garrison Savannah, 1991.  
King George VI Chase: Burrough Hill Lad, 1994.  
Scottish Grand National: Welford, 1995.  
Welsh National: Corbiere, 1992; Burrough Hill Lad, 1993; Shearboy, 1996.  
Irish Grand National: Muckin', 1997.

sponsible for Esha Ness's "victory" in the void race of 1993. Burrough Hill Lad, the dark, dominant steeplechaser of 1994, won her the Gold Cup for the first time but one sensed, yesterday, that her greatest moment came in watching Mark partner Garrison Savannah to win the race in 1991. "That was very special," she said feelingly. "But I've got so many memories that money can't buy. I haven't got a lot of money but I feel I'm one of the richest people here." She would like one more memory, a valedictory winner at the greatest of all meetings, and how apt it would be if Ginger Fox, who runs in the last race tomorrow, could oblige.

Simon Barnes, page 1

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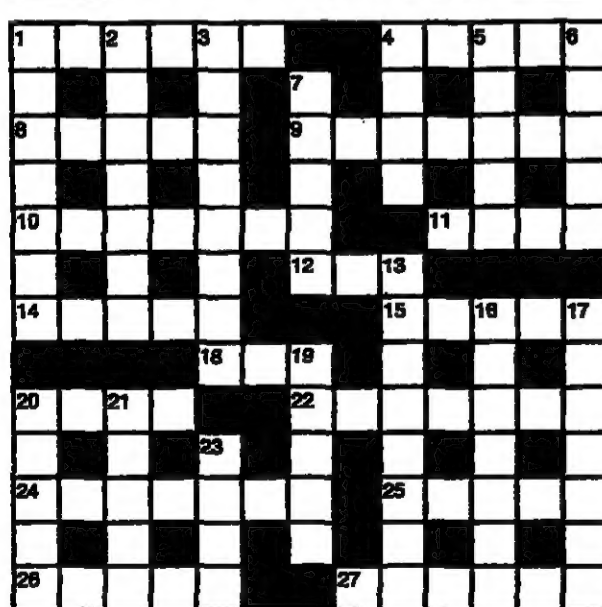
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### TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1667

## ACROSS

- 1 In words (6)
- 4 Be injured; draw fluid from (5)
- 8 In good condition; sea inlet (5)
- 9 Antarctic bird (7)
- 10 A soft roll (7)
- 11 Flout (authority) (4)
- 12 Condensation (3)
- 14 Bring to bear (5)
- 15 Made eyes at (5)
- 18 The feeling of self (3)
- 20 Risky (bond), poor-quality (food) (4)
- 22 Tries to date (4,3)
- 24 Bohuslav — Cz. composer (7)
- 25 Die by water (5)
- 26 Fashion; title (5)
- 27 Spiral round (6)

## DOWN

- 1 In sight (7)
- 2 Regular habits (7)
- 3 Reign throne (8)
- 4 Gang; sounds like forbidden (4)
- 5 Escape notice of (5)
- 6 Drab, dirty (5)
- 7 Rate of progress (5)
- 13 Ordinary, for normal use (8)
- 16 Three Beethoven overtures (7)
- 17 Lessening of (political) tension (7)
- 19 Fibre from old rope (5)
- 20 Writer Henry, outlaw Jesse (5)
- 21 Anxious (5)
- 23 Quote, refer to (4)

## SOLUTION TO NO 1666

- ACROSS: 1 Plagiarism 8 Tennis 9 In all 10 Hook  
11 Anatomy 13 Uncle 14 Fifty 16 Chestnut 17 Bier  
20 Swear 21 Gouging 22 Ascendancy  
DOWN: 1 Pitch 2 Anne of Cleves 3 Iris 4 Relate  
5 Spin-offs 6 Mahatma 7 Clay 12 Leonardo  
13 Upright 15 Budgie 18 Rugby 19 Fund

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